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The SON of TARZAN

By

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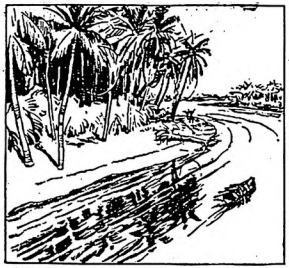


Down the broad Ugambia river a small boat floated with the ebb tide and current. Her crew were lazily enjoying this rest from their toil of rowing up-stream. As they neared the sea, where waited the mother ship, ready to sail back to England, their attention was suddenly attracted to a strange apparition appearing on the jungle shore. With skinny arms outstretched it screamed at them in a wild, cackling voice.

"A white man!" exclaimed the mate. "Man the oars, boys; we'll just pull over an' see what he wants." As the boat neared shore they beheld an emaciated creature with matted hair and a long beard. Tears rolled down his sunken cheeks as he jabbered in some alien tongue. "Speak English?" questioned the mate. He did. Brokenly, and with seeming effort this human wreck told his rescuers a weird tale.

It rambled over years of privation, hardships, and torture in the awful jungle. He was a Russian, but how he came to Africa and his name, he would not say. The men concluded he had forgotten the incidents of his former life because of the frightful ordeals he had experienced. Ten years had he been a slave in a cannibal village, beaten and stoned by the women, slashed and disfigured by the warriors.

Yet somehow he had managed to live and at last found his way to the coast—a human derelict, mentally and physically. When he finished his almost unbelievable story, he begged the sailors to take him away with them—anywhere. And so, moved by pity, they took him aboard the "Marjorie W.," nursed, fed and partly restored him to health. Thus came Alexis Paulvitch out of a living death and once again into the life of Tarzan of the Apes.

Son-01

For several weeks after the Russian had been taken aboard, the "Marjorie W." cruised up the coast. Chartered by a wealthy syndicate, she had been equipped with a laboratory and a staff of scientists and sent searching for new sources of a natural product heretofore imported expensively from South America. The work had brought the expedition to a lonely island off the coast of west-

During this month's idleness the monotony of life had become trying to the crew, and so frequent permission had been given them for shore leave. Far from being grateful for his rescue, Paulvitch, as he recovered physically, developed a sense of dull hatred toward his companions. Still too weak to work, he was soon left to his own devices, tolerated by the sailors merely because they

Today he, too, tiring of the blighting sameness of existence on the ship, had asked permission to accompany them ashore. The island was heavily timbered, a dense jungle running almost down to the beach. The scientists were far inland, prosecuting their search, while the ship's company separated to fish or hunt. The Russian, avoided as usual, wandered up the shore and at length lay down to sleep beneath a great tree's shade.

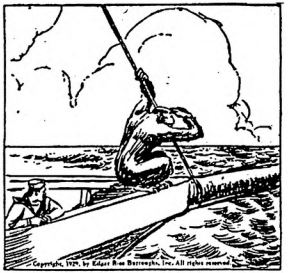
An hour after, he was awakened by the touch of a hand upon his shoulder. With a start he sat up to see a large anthropoid ape squatting at his side, inspecting him intently. Paulvitch shivered as he staggered to his feet, thoroughly frightened. The ape rose at his side. Nowhere was help in sight. The ape plucked at his shoulder, jabbering plaintively. Half doubled with fear, Paulvitch tried to escape. The ape followed, grabbing the man by the arm.

Son-02

The huge ape clung to Paulvitch even when they came in sight of the returning sailors. It appeared to mean no harm, and evidently was accustomed to the association of human beings. Into the twisted brain of the Russian sprang a wild idea. This animal would be worth a lot of money in London! Even when the now curious men came running toward the oddly assorted pair the anthropoid showed no further signs of fear or fight.

Instead, it grasped each sailor in turn by the shoulder and peered long and earnestly into his face. What meant such strange behavior? Having inspected them all, it returned to the Russian's side, seeming to be greatly disappointed. The men were delighted with the placid, friendly animal, and decided to add him to the "Marjorie W."s" collection of pets. The ape clambered into the "long boat" with them and contentedly seated himself.

On the short row to the ship it grabbed an oar from a sailor and with easy skill helped the craft along, just as though the whole affair was no new experience to him. The sailors were amazed. Paulvitch's hopes ran high. He would train this ape and make a fortune! Aboard the ship, the ape examined each new face minutely, evincing the same disappointment. Even the scientists were unable to account for its strange actions.

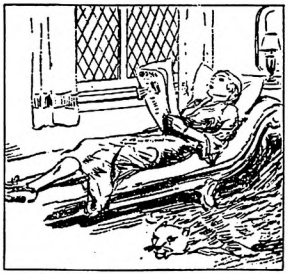


After exploring every nook of the ship on her return voyage, Ajax, as they had named the ape, lapsed into utter indifference to all about him. Sometimes, though, his awe inspiring bulk would be seen in the ship's bow, gazing intently forward, seeking—WHAT? At- length the "Marjorie W." came to England. Came also with the landing of Paulvitch and Ajax, a chain of strange circumstances destined to affect the lives of many people.

Son-03

Their American expedition successfully ended, the officers and scientists, filled with compassion for the pitiful wreck of a man they had rescued from the jungle, gave Paulvitch money and wished him and his Ajax good luck. Back in civilization, the Russian had his hands full with the ape. Each new face must be carefully scrutinized, much to the horror of many of his victims. In London, Paulvitch took his prize to a famous animal trainer.

This man, much impressed with the ape's intelligence, agreed to train him for the lion's share of the profits of exhibiting him. Meanwhile, he would provide for the keep of both the ape and its owner. It was not many weeks before Ajax was taught to ride a bicycle, eat with a knife and fork, count up to ten and do a number of remarkable stunts. One of the leading music halls booked the act, and AJAX became the public's latest fad.



Lady Greystoke lingered over the "Times" as she breakfast in her cheerful boudoir and awaited an appointment with her son's tutor. A glowing account of the marvelous Ajax's "debut" had idly caught her attention. What memories that ape's picture conjured up to the beautiful, cultured woman! Romance, thrills, danger and LOVE in the untamed Jungle! What contrast—those experiences with happy, even tenure of her present days.

Rarely did she speak of those years now, even to her husband. That was the past. Few, indeed, knew that the handsome Lord Greystoke had been the savage Tarzan of the Apes. Next to her deep love for her husband, Lady Greystoke's thoughts centered about her twelve-year-old son. A light tap at the door brought her abruptly from the brief reverie induced by Ajax's picture. Smilingly she greeted the worried-looking young tutor.

Son-04

The serious young Oxford man made their interview a disturbing one for Lady Greystoke. "Jack is exceptionally intelligent," he exclaimed, "but he takes no interest in the subjects we study. Only feats of strength appeal to him and he will pore for hours over tales of wild beasts, savages and African life." The boy's mother tapped her foot nervously. "You discourage this, of course?" she ventured. "You know my wishes!"

"I have tried to," he replied, a slight flush mounting his cheeks. "But—your son is very powerful for one so young." After several moments silence, Lady Greystoke spoke again. "For strong reasons it is very necessary, Mr. Moore, that you do everything in your power to discourage this tendency in Jack—" but she got no further. A wild yell outside the window brought them both to their feet as another wilder one echoed the first.

The room was on the second floor of the mansion. Outside the window spread a large tree. Upon one of its branches balanced a tall, well-built boy apparently exercising his lungs in wild ecstacy for pure joy of living. Before Lady Greystoke could reach the window to chide her only child, the youth leaped nimbly from the tree, landing squarely in the room, a disarming smile on his handsome face and said, "Behold the wild man from Borneo!"

Then he threw his arms about his mother's neck, kissing her affectionately. "Mother—there's an educated ape in town. It can do everything but talk. All the fellows have seen Ajax. Please, can't I?" "We will have to consult your father," evaded Lady Greystoke. "You know I do not approve of such exhibitions." The door opened, admitting a tall, grey-eyed man. "Jack wants to see a trained ape," said Lady Greystoke, looking warningly at her husband,

Son-05

That evening, when their son did not appear for dinner, Lady Greystoke again referred to the subject of Ajax the ape. "John," she said, "something MUST be done to discourage Jack's tendency toward anything that may excite the craving for the savage life which I fear he has inherited from you. You known that my constant fear is that our boy may have the call of the jungle in his blood, and then——" She could not voice her troubled thoughts.

Her husband laughed down upon her upturned face before he bent his head and kissed her. "Just because Jack wants to see Ajax is no sign he would wish to marry an ape," he said, adding, more seriously, "I have always believed you were mistaken in never permitting me to tell our boy anything concerning my early life. Had I told him of my experiences as Tarzan of the Apes, it would have been best, should the jungle lust ever claim him."

But Lady Greystoke only shook her head as she always did when the subject was broached. Never could she bring herself to tell her son the story of Tarzan. What desires would arise in his young brain were he to know his father had been raised to manhood by a tribe of fierce anthropoid apes! In the meanwhile Jack was enjoying to the full the stolen pleasure of the music hall, arriving just as

As the ape's antics progressed the boy's eyes went wide in wonder. On the stage the trainer had noted the handsome youth alone in a box. Now came the time for Ajax to go among the audience, pretending to look for a long lost relative. Tonight the trainer directed the ape's attention to the future Lord Greystoke. The shaggy, powerful beast leaped with a spring to the youngster's side—

Son-06

The music hall's patrons now witnessed a strange sight. The great ape, grasping the boy's shoulders, peered long and earnestly into his face. A broad smile lighted the latter's features as he stroked Ajax's shaggy head and talked to him in a low voice. The ape seemed troubled and excited. He jabbered, mumbled, roughly caressed Jack, and at length climbed into the box and snuggled down close to the boy's side.

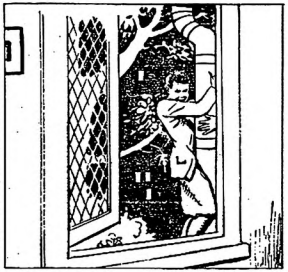
The audience applauded wildly when the ape refused to budge in answer to its trainer's commands. Finally, reduced to desperation by this show of mutiny on the part of his valuable animal, the trainer threatened with a whip. Then he found himself facing two infuriated enemies instead of one; for the boy, leaping to his feet, seized a chair and stood ready to defend his ape friend. Ajax had bared his fangs and was uttering horrid growls.

The delighted cheers now turned to cries of terror. A near-panic threatened. What might have happened, but for a timely interruption, may only be surmised . . . Meanwhile, Lord Greystoke, in his study, listened to an angry gentleman from Oxford. "I resign, sir, at once," the latter said. "You do not need a tutor for your son. What he needs is a wild animal trainer." And he related his recent experience.

When young Mr. Moore had entered the room of his youthful charge, as was his custom each evening at 10 o'clock, he was surprised to see the future Lord Greystoke dressed for the street instead of for bed! Furthermore, the lad was about to depart by way of the window. But when he realized he was discovered, he turned back as though to relinquish his planned adventure; then suddenly lifted the astonished tutor high above his head.

Son-07

"What is the meaning of this?" panted the excited tutor. "I am going to see Ajax, and YOU mustn't interrupt," laughed the boy. The now furious Mr. Moore next found himself face downward upon the bed, his head shoved deep into a soft pillow. He struggled, but his efforts were vain. For whatever else Tarzan of the Apes may or may not have bequeathed his son, he had at least handed down almost as marvelous a physique as his own at Jack's age.



The tutor was as putty in the boy's hands. Kneeling upon him, Jack tore a sheet to shreds and bound the man's hands behind his back. All the while he talked: "I am Waji—chief of the Waja. You are an Arab sheik who would murder my people and steal my ivory. Villain! I have you in my power at last! I go, but I shall return!" And the son of Tarzan jumped across the room, and disappeared through the window down a water spout.

All of which, as Mr. Moore wrathfully told Lord Greystoke, was fitting cause for him to resign. His business was teaching. "Not untying myself from strips of bed sheets," he added. Tarzan, after satisfying himself the tutor was unharmed, determined it was time to act. He called for his motor car and started for the theatre, while the horrified tutor departed for less vigorous employment.

"I see my son is no little Lord Fauntleroy," Tarzan commented as he drove through the London streets. Jack had disobeyed his mother's objections and had gone to see Ajax. That was unusual—but enough. In the music hall the trainer hesitated as he faced the infuriated ape. Suddenly a tall, broad-shouldered man brushed past him. The youth uttered one confused word, "Father!" The ape gave one look at the English lord—and headed toward him.

Son-08

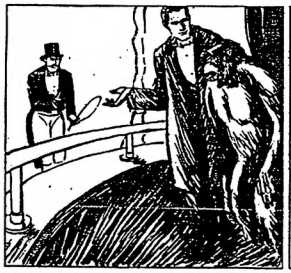
Tarzan's eyes went wide in astonishment and he stopped as though turned to stone. The giant beast was calling out to him in excited jabbering . . . "Akut!" cried the man. The bewildered boy looked from his father to the ape, then back again, as from the lips of the Englishman flowed the gutturals of an ape that were answered in kind by the huge anthropoid, now clinging to the man with every evidence of pleasure and satisfaction.

And from the wings an unkempt figure watched the strange proceedings, his evil, loering features working spasmodically in varying expressions ranging from amazement to terror . . . "Long have I looked for you, Tarzan," the ape was saying. "Now that I have found you at last, I shall come to your jungle and live there always." The man stroked the beast's head affectionately, oblivious to his son's astonished, fascinated gaze.

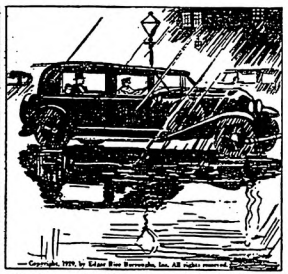
Through the man's mind was running rapidly a train of recollections that carried him far into the depths of the primeval African forest, where this huge, man-like beast had fought shoulder to shoulder with him years before. He saw the black Mugambi wielding his deadly knob-stick, and, beside them, with bared fangs and bristling whiskers, Sheeta, the terrible. And pressing close behind the savage panther, this same ape, Akut, and his fellows.

The man sighed. Strong within him surged the jungle hunger he had thought dead. Ah! if he could go back—for even a brief month! To feel the brush of leafy branches against his naked hide. To smell the jungle fragrance. To sense the noiseless coming of great beasts upon his trail; to hunt and to be hunted; to kill! The picture was alluring. And then came another picture, His wife, still beautiful and young; friends; a home; his son!

Son-09



At the thought of his son, Tarzan came abruptly back to the present. He shrugged his giant shoulders as he answered the ape. "No, Akut, it cannot be!" he said. "You could not be happy here—I may not be happy there, any more!" The animal trainer had stepped forward. The ape bared his fangs, growling. "Go with him, Akut," said Tarzan of the Apes. "I will come and see you tomorrow." Sullenly, the beast moved to the trainer's side.



The latter told where they might be found, and then Tarzan turned toward his son. "Come," he said sternly, and without another word the two left the theatre and had driven nearly home though the half deserted London streets before either of them spoke. Then it was the boy who first broke the silence. "The ape knew you, father," he said, "and you spoke together in the ape's tongue. How did the ape know you and you its language?"

And then, briefly and for the first time, Tarzan of the Apes told his son of his early life—of his birth in the jungle, of the death of his parents, and of how Kala, the great she-ape, had suckled and raised him from infancy almost to manhood. He told him, too, of the dangers and horrors of the jungle; of the great beasts that stalked one by day and by night; of the periods of drought, the torrential rains; of cold; of intense heat—and nakedness.

Then he spoke of the fear and suffering, of all the things that seem most horrible to the creature of civilization, in the hope that the knowledge of them might sweep from the lad's mind any inherent desire for the jungle. Yet these were the very things that made the jungle memories, so precious to Tarzan, and all unknowingly as he talked his every sentence glowed with the sparks that fired the boy's hungry desire for adventure.

Son-10

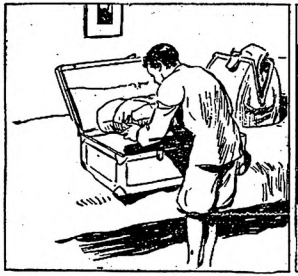
As the father told his son this story of his life, he forgot one thing—the principal one—that the boy at his side, listening with eager ears, was the son of Tarzan of the Apes. After the two said good night, Lord Greystoke told his wife of the evening's events. Lady Jane, foreseeing that their son must sometime know of those frightful years, prayed that the boy would not inherit the lure she knew was still strong in the father's heart.

Tarzan visited Akut, as he promised, but refused to take Jack along. This time, Tarzan met the wily owner of the ape but failed to recognize in the decrepit wretch his Russian enemy of former days. Influenced by Akut's pleadings, he tried to purchase the beast, but the crafty Paulvitch refused to sell . . . Several days later the boy himself found his way into that mean section of London where he had discovered the Russian and Akut lived.

Often, thereafter, the boy stole away to spend hours with his ape-friend, until little by little Paulvitch came to know his story and identity. Now into that evil brain crept a plan whereby he might revenge himself for fancied wrongs and further increase his pile of gold. Left alone with Akut, the boy soon found he could make the great beast understand him. Many words of the anthropoid's language came instinctively to him.

After having discovered Tarzan, the ape had consistently refused to perform upon the stage. No longer was he a source of revenue, and Paulvitch at last accepted a fabulous sum from Lord Greystoke whereby Akut was to be delivered to a vessel soon sailing for Africa. Lady Jane was delighted as her husband spoke of this arrangement. Now her son would think of other things, she thought. But Jack listened with far different thoughts!

Son-11



The beginning of the Ape's trip back to jungle freedom was set for the very day on which the future Lord Greystoke was to return to school. Generously supplied with money, he had seemingly busied himself preparing for the event, and had invested in many strange purchases, which he managed to pack, undetected. With his parents' permission he had gone for a last farewell with Akut, and here he was soon earnestly pleading with old Paulvitch.

"Let me take the ape to Dover," he said. "I can do it and still arrive at my school in time. No one will be any the wiser. It will save you the tiresome journey, no harm will be done, and I will have an extra day with my jungle friend before I lose him forever." The wad of bills he placed in the Russian's hand was almost unnecessary, for the plan fitted perfectly into that which the wicked Paulvitch had in his own devilish brain.

That afternoon Lord and Lady Greystoke bade their son good-by and saw him safely settled in a first-class compartment of the railway carriage that would set him down at Eton in a few hours. Little did they realize then that many years were to elapse and strange things happen before, if ever, they were to see him again! . . . When they had left him, the boy gathered his baggage, left the train and drove directly to the Russian's address.

It was dusk when he arrived. He found Paulvitch awaiting him—pacing the floor nervously. The ape was tied with a stout rope to the bedpost. It was the first time the boy had seen the animal secured. He looked questioningly at the Russian. The man mumbled some excuse. Another rope was in the villain's hand; with a noose in its end. The man's pockmarked face worked horribly as he talked to himself. His actions made the lad uneasy.

Son-12

Paulvitch pretended to show the boy how to secure the ape should it exhibit signs of rebellion during the trip. Jack laughed: "That's not necessary—he'll do whatever I tell him." "Come here!" said the man, "and do as I tell you, or you can't take him to Dover!" The boy did as told. Still smiling, he held his hands behind him. The Russian slipped the noose over Jack's wrists and quickly knotted the cords tight.

The fellow's attitude of friendliness now changed immediately! With an ugly oath he wheeled his prisoner about, hurling him violently to the floor. His fingers sought the boy's throat as he grinned down horribly into his victim's face. "Your father ruined me," he mumbled crazily. "This will pay him! I will bring him to see your body—and tell him the ape did it!" the twisted fiend cackled with gloating laughter.

Suddenly the room echoed with the growls of the maddened ape! Its great muscles surged out beneath its shaggy hide. Paulvitch looked up, his face white with terror—THE APE WAS FREE! With a single bound the beast fell upon the man, wrenching him from the struggling boy. Great fingers sunk into the wretch's throat; yellow fangs snapped shut, and when they closed the breath of life had gone forever from the dastardly Paulvitch.

Assisted by Akut, the boy worked over the bonds that held him . . . Finally they yielded their secret. He cut the cords from his body. Opening one of his bags he drew forth some garments. His plans were well laid! The beast docilely did all that Jack directed. Into the midnight stillness, unmolested, the pair slunk from the house. No casual observer would have noticed that one of the two was an ape!

Son-13

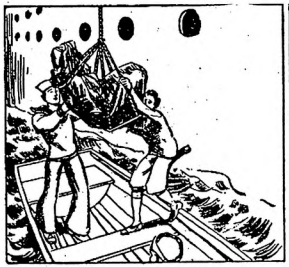
The killing of the Russian by his great trained ape was a nine days' wonder to all London. The papers were filled with the mystery when no trace of the missing animal could be found. But, as usual, other news soon caught the public's attention—and everyone forgot the matter. All but Tarzan of the Apes, who, after futile search for his son, realized that in some way Akut was connected with Jack's disappearance.

Just as an African-bound liner was about to sail, two last-minute passengers came aboard. One evidently was an old lady, heavily veiled, and so weakened by the infirmities of age she had to be wheeled up the gangway by a young man who stated the invalid was his grandmother. The youth would permit no one to assist him to their stateroom, and, during the long voyage, that was the last seen of the old lady until they disembarked.

The supposed grandson insisted upon doing the steward's work inside their cabin, saying the presence of strangers was more than the seasick old lady could stand. Outside the cabin—and none there was who knew what he did INSIDE—the youngster was just as any other healthy, normal boy. He mingled with the passengers, and became a favorite with the officers and men. But to the politely curious questions concerning his "grandma" he was oddly silent.

Among the passengers who sought the boy's acquaintance, with the least success, was a noted crook "wanted" in a dozen countries. He had paid little attention to the youth until one day he had seen him accidently display a large roll of bank notes. From that moment the noted blackguard schemed to find means of transferring that money to his own pocket. Clever as he was, he had been unsuccessful up to the day they landed on the African coast.

Son-14



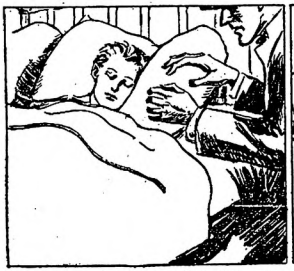
The task of lowering the boy's "grandmother" over the ship's side to a waiting canoe was rather difficult. The lad insisted on being always at her side. When at last she was safely settled in the bottom of the craft bearing them shoreward her grandson dropped catlike after her. So interested was he in seeing her comfortably disposed he failed to notice the package that slipped from his pocket into the sea.

It was quite dark when the boy and the old woman entered a rickety shack boasting the name "Hotel" and were given a back room on the second floor. Here a wave of homesickness overcame him, as he explained to his "grandmother." She could remain in Africa if she wished. As for him, his conscience demanded his return by the same steamer to England and his parents. To which "grandma" said nothing much, seeming to prefer sleep.

Having come to a decision, the lad felt a sense of relief from the worry that had haunted him for many sleepless nights, and when he closed his own eyes it was to dream of a happy reunion with those at home . . . And as he dreamed, Fate, cruel and inexorable, crept stealthily upon him down the dark corridor of the squalid "hotel." Fate in the form of the crook, Condon, who had shadowed the lad's every move since they left the ship!

Cautiously the man approached the door; listened until the regular breathing inside assured him the inmates were asleep. Deftly he inserted a skeleton key, entered and bolted the door quietly behind him. The moon dimly lit the interior as he groped his way toward the bed. In the far corner of the room something moved—moved with such silent stealthiness that even the trained ears of the burglar failed to hear it.

Son-15



Condon searched the sleeping boy's clothes—the money was not there. Perhaps it was beneath his pillow. The cloud that had hidden the moon rolled aside. He saw the boy was alone. At the same instant the lad opened his eyes and recognized Condon. The man made a quick dive for his victim's throat to prevent an outcry. Instead, he felt his wrists seized in a grip of steel, and he heard a low and savage snarl behind him.

He felt other hands at his throat reaching over his shoulders from behind. Casting a terrified glance backward his hair stood on end at the sight his eyes revealed, for grasping him from the rear was a huge, manlike ape, its bared fangs close to his throat. The lad pinioned his wrists. Neither uttered a sound. Where was the grandmother? Condon's eyes swept the room and then bulged with horror as he realized the awful truth.

In the power of what creatures of mystery had he placed himself! Frantically he fought to beat off the lad that he might turn upon the fearsome thing at his back. Freeing one hand he struck a savage blow at the boy's face. His act seemed to unloose a thousand devils in the hairy creature clinging to his throat. He heard a hideous growl—the last thing he ever heard in this world—as he was dragged backward upon the floor.

A heavy body fell upon him, powerful teeth gripped his throat, and his head whirled in a sudden blackness . . . The ape rose from the man's prostrate form and shook himself. The boy, horrified, leaped from the bed to lean over the man's body. He knew that Akut had killed in his defense, even as it had killed the villainous Russian, but here in savage Africa, far from home and friends, WHAT would they do to him and his faithful ape?

Son-16

The boy was half-frantic with despair. In the morning they would be discovered! Then the chances were they would drag him and Akut forth and hang them to the nearest tree. He had rend of such things being done in the far West of his mother's native land, America, and Africa was even worse and wilder than America! Was there no means of escape? Ah! his money! THAT would save them, for gold would do anything!

He searched for his bank roll through the pockets of his clothes. It was not there! Lighting the lamp he looked everywhere for it and at last nerved himself to examine the body of Condon, for he now guessed the purpose for which the man had entered the room. The ape squatted in a corner watching his young companion. An hour after, he gave up the search. His money was GONE! And with it went hope. What were they to do?

For all his inherited size and strength, he was, after all, but a youngster, a frightened, homesick boy, who could think of but a single glaring fact; they had killed a man and they were among savage strangers. Long he sat upon the bed, thinking—how long he did not know—but finally he was aroused by a noise coming from the floor below. Springing quickly to his feet he blew out the lamp and turned to the ape, his mind made up.

Last night he had determined to start for home and beg forgiveness from his parents for his mad adventure. Now he knew that he might never return to them. What if Akut HAD done the deed! Wouldn't everybody think it was his fault? "Come," he said in the language of the great apes. Forgetful of the fact that he wore only his thin pajama suit, he led the way to the open window and paused a moment, listening attentively.

Son-17

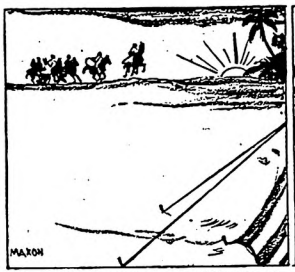
A single tree grew a few feet from the window. Nimbly, the lad sprang for it—clinging catlike for an instant to a branch before he jumped quietly to the ground. Close behind him came the great ape. Two hundred yards away a spur of the jungle ran close to the straggling town. Towards this he led the way. None saw them. A moment later the jungle swallowed them and the future Lord Greystoke passed from the eyes and the knowledge of men.

Beneath a palm tree in a little desert oasis, Captain Armand Jacot of the Foreign Legion reclined at his ease, well content with this day's work. Near him his sun-tanned men prepared to eat after a twelve-hour ride. But that trip over the burning sands had not been in vain, for among the soldiers, silent and taciturn, squatted white-robed Arabs, securely bound and under heavy guard. No wonder the broad-shouldered captain felt well satisfied.

For a long hot month, he and his little troop had scoured the desert for this sin-stained band of marauders charged with the thefts of camels, horses and goats, and enough murders to have sent the whole unsavory gang to the guillotine several times over. At last he had come upon them. During a short fight he had lost two of his men and six of the Arabs had perished. But five were his prisoners now and best of all their ringleador, Achmet ben Houdin.

From the prisoners the captain's mind wandered to the little garrison, where, in one more day, he should find awaiting him, with eager welcome, his wife and little daughter. His eyes softened to the memory of them. Even now he could see the beauty of the mother reflected in the childish lines of little Jeanne's face. He fancied already he could feel the soft velvet of her rosy cheek as he held her in a loving embrace—tomorrow!

Son-18



Shortly before sundown, a group of horsemen on the horizon were seen by a sentry. They came galloping over the now golden sands directly toward the French Legion's little camp. They made no attempt to conceal themselves, but Captain Jacot, suspecting treachery, gave his men a few sharp commands. The party of Arabs halted a hundred yards away; all but one, who rode straight into the camp and dismounted before Jacot.

"I am Sheik Amor ben Khatour," he announced. Captain Jacot eyed the newcomer, a tall, sour-looking man, narrowly. "Well?" he asked. The Arab came directly to the point. "Achmet ben Houdin, your prisoner, is my sister's son. Deliver him to me and I will see that he behaves." Jacot shook his head. "That cannot be. He is charged with many murders. If he is innocent, he will be released!" "And if he is not?" questioned the Sheik.

The Arab's left hand had been hidden beneath his burnoose. Now he withdrew it, disclosing a large goatskin purse bulging and heavy with gold coins. He opened it and let a handful trickle into his right palm, then replaced them. All the time he was silent. Jacot watched him closely. They were alone now. The Sheik held the purse toward Jacot, stepped close and whispered meaningly: "Achmet ben Houdin, my sister's son, MIGHT manage to escape this night!"

The French officer flushed deeply, then he went very white and with fists clenched took a half step toward the Arab. Suddenly he thought better of whatever impulse was moving him. "Sergeant!" he called. The noncommissioned officer hurried forward saluting, as his heels clicked together before his superior. "Take this black dog back to his people." he ordered. "See that they leave at once and shoot the first who attempts to return."

Son-19

The Sheik drew himself up to his full height. His eyes blazed with hate. He raised the bag of gold level with Jacot's face and said: "You will pay more than this for the life of my sister's son! As much again for the name you have called me and a hundredfold of sorrow besides!" "Get out of here," growled Captain Armand Jacot, "before I kick you out!" With that he dismissed the Sheik and his threefold threat from his mind.

The Sheik's nephew and his accomplice were duly tried, convicted, and met their fate according to the laws of France. A month later, seven-year-old Jeanne Jacot mysteriously disappeared. Neither the wealth of her parents nor the powerful resources of the great Republic her father served were able to wrest the secret of her whereabouts from the inscrutable desert that had swallowed the lovely little girl and her abductor.

A reward of such enormous proportions was offered that many adventurers were attracted to the hunt. Most of them perished beneath the African sun upon the silent sands of the Sahara without finding even a trace of the stolen child. Two Swedes, Janssen and Malbihn, after three years of following false clews, gave up the search far to the south of the Sahara and turned their attention to the more profitable business of ivory poaching.

Throughout the whole interior of Africa this pair became known for relentless cruelty and greed. The natives feared and hated them. European governments sought their capture in vain. In company with their fierce band of perhaps a hundred renegade Arabs and negro slaves, the cut-throats made swift and sudden raids, slaughtering elephants, plundering native villages, and leaving in their path brutal crimes and wanton depredations.

Son-20

In the heart of the jungle, hidden away on the banks of an unexplored river, lay a small, heavily palisaded village. Twenty palm-thatched huts sheltered its black population; a half dozen goat-skin tents housed a few Arabs who lived here while collecting the cargoes their camel trains bore twice each year to the markets of Timbuktu. Before one of these tents played a little black-haired, black-eyed pretty girl, some ten years of age.

With her nut-brown skin and graceful carriage she looked every inch a daughter of the desert. Her little fingers were busily engaged in fashioning a skirt of grass for a grotesque doll made of ivory and wood, quite hideous and soiled, but Meriem thought Geeka (as she had named it) the most adorable thing in the world. On Geeka she lavished all her confidence and love; for everyone else was either indifferent or cruel to little Meriem.

Mabunu, the toothless, filthy, ill-tempered old hag who watched over the child, was always inflicting some minor torture upon Meriem. Even more than she feared old Mabunu, she was afraid, with an almost hysterical terror, of the Sheik whom she knew as father. Always was he scolding her for nothing, often ending his tirades by beating Meriem until she was black and blue. Yet no amount of cruelty seemed to crush the innate sweetness of her nature.

Left alone, she was always happy and singing, playing with Geeka, decking her hair with wild flowers, or making ropes of grasses. Only when the Sheik was near was Meriem quiet and subdued. She feared too the gloomy jungle surrounding the village, filled with chattering monkeys by day and roaring beasts by night. Yet often she wanted to run away out into the terrible jungle forever rather than longer face the ever present terror of her father.

Son-21

Little Meriem could scarcely recall any other existence than that of the stern cruelty of the Sheik and Mabunu. Dimly, though, in her childish memory lurked the blurred recollections of a gentle mother. "Oh, Geeka," she would whisper to the doll, "why have I no mother, and why does the Sheik, my father, not love me?" Today as she poured out her troubled heart to Geeka she heard the sounds of wrangling beyond the village gates.

With the curiosity of childhood, Meriem listened. Presently she heard the crowd moving up the street toward the Sheik's tent. Cautious she stuck her little head around the edge of the tent. She saw two strangers—white men. They were alone; but as they approached she learned from the natives' talk that they possessed a considerable following that was camped outside the village and had come to trade for ivory.

The old Arab met them at the entrance to his tent, his eyes narrowing wickedly as he listened. Then the Sheik said: "I have no ivory." Meriem gasped. She knew that in a nearby hut the great tusks were piled high. She took a step forward to get a better view of the strangers. How yellow their hair was! How white their skins! Suddenly one of them saw her. Meriem noticed the look of shocked surprise crossing his face, as she dodged from sight.

The Sheik saw it, too, and guessed the cause of it. "I have no ivory," he repeated. "I do not wish to trade. Go away. Go now." It would have been suicide to have disobeyed. The two strangers turned and left the village. The Sheik walked to where Meriem hid, very frightened, clutched her by the arm and dragged her into the tent, beating her ruthlessly. "Stay within," he growled. "Never let the strangers see thy face again or I shall kill you."

Son-22

In the camp of the strangers one was speaking excitedly to the other! "There is not the slightest doubt about it, Malbihn! But why the old scoundrel hasn't claimed the reward puzzles me!" "There are some things dearer to an Arab's heart, Jenssen, than money." "Revenge is one of them," answered the other. "It won't do any harm to TRY the power of gold," replied Jenssen. The other shrugged: "Not on the Sheik, but we might bribe his men."

But bribery failed—grewsomely! They succeeded in luring a young headman of the village to their scheme, who, for a certain sum, was to deliver Meriem to the Swedes late that night. Immediately after dark the two white men prepared to break camp the moment the headman brought that which they awaited. Toward midnight came the sound of many footsteps. As they approached the firelight, Jenssen saw that two of the men carried a litter.

Jenssen cursed beneath his breath. Could the fool be bringing other than the living prize he had paid for? The bearers came to a halt before the white man. "This has your gold purchased," said one of them. They set the litter down, turned, and vanished into the blackness of the jungle. The thing upon the litter was covered with a piece of cloth. "He should have known we wanted her alive," said Malbihn, as he jerked away the cover.

At sight of what lay beneath, both men stepped back—involuntary oaths upon their lips—for there before them lay the dead body of the faithless headman, with the Sheik's own dagger in his heart, telling its wordless message . . . . Five minutes later, the "safari" of Jenssen and Malbihn was forcing its way rapidly toward the west, with a dozen natives guarding the rear from the attack they momentarily expected.

Son-23

His first night in the jungle was one which the son of Tarzan held longest in his memory. No savage beasts menaced him; there was no sign of hideous barbarians. But crouched close to the great ape in the crotch of the tree, the boy shivered through a sleepless night. Fear had thrust him into the jungle, a fugitive, and because of the murder by the ape he thought he could never return to his parents to bring shame upon their honored name.

Self-blame plunged him into deep misery. Through the night he longed to die, but with the rising sun his spirits rose. He would return to civilization by another way, avoiding the little trading place where even now the body of the stranger so mysteriously slain was being discovered. He shook Akut into wakefulness. "Come," he said, "I am cold and hungry. We must search for food out there."

He pointed to the open plain and slid to the ground. The ape looked carefully about first, sniffing the morning air. Then, satisfied that no danger lurked near, he descended slowly to the boy's side. "Numa and Sabor, his mate, feast upon those who descend first and look afterward," said the old ape, giving the son of Tarzan his first lesson in jungle lore. Side by side they set off across the rough plain running until the boy was warm.

Some eggs they found and these he sucked raw, as also he ate the roots and tubers which Akut unearthed. The ape contented himself with some rodents and worms he dug up. Beyond the plain across a low bluff they found a shallow water hole. A herd of zebra galloped away as they approached to drink. Akut now took the lead, the boy following close behind its heels, his every sense alert, his nerves keyed to a high pitch of excitement. This was life!

Son-24

The son of Tarzan thought now only of the savage joy of living, and of pitting his wits and prowess against the wiles and might of the jungle. He knew no fear. His father had had none to transmit to him. The ape and he had gone but a little way farther when the boy caught the scent of a lion. His face lighted with a smile. Something told him he would have known that scent among all in the jungle even if Akut had not said a lion was near.

There was a weird familiarity in it that made the short hairs rise at the nape of his neck, and brought his upper lip into an involuntary snarl. His skin tingled with a pleasurable sensation he had never known before. Now was he another creature—wary, alert, ready. He felt his ears werg flattening back against his skull in preparation for deadly combat. Thus did the scent of Numa, the lion, transform the boy into a beast.

He was some distance ahead of Akut when suddenly he heard a shrill scream of warning from the ape. Turning quickly, the boy saw directly before him that which sent tremors of excitement racing along every nerve of his body. In his path stood a sleek, beautiful lioness, her yellow-green eyes glittering wickedly. Behind the lioness bellowed the ape, hurling taunts to distract the beast and instructions to the boy.

But Sabor was not to be diverted. The boy stood between her and her mate. It was suspicious. Probably he had ulterior designs upon her lord and master or upon the fruits of their kill. A lioness is short-tempered. Akut's bellowing annoyed her. She uttered a low rumbling growl, taking a step toward the boy. "The tree!" screamed Akut. The boy turned and fled, and at the same instant the lioness charged with a swift, crouching spring.

Son-25

The tree was but a few paces away. A limb hung ten feet from the ground, and as the boy leaped for it the lioness leaped for him. Like a monkey, he pulled himself up and to one side. A great forepaw caught him a glancing blow at the hips—just grazing him. One claw hooked itself into his pajama trousers, ripping them off as the lioness sped by . . . Half naked the lad drew himself to safety as the beast again leaped for him.

Akut, from a nearby tree, jabbered and scolded. The boy threw dead twigs and branches at the upturned face of Sabor, just as his father had done 20 years before when he, too, had taunted and tantalized the great cats of the jungle. The lioness fretted about awhile and finally stalked majestically away into the underbrush. Freed from danger, the boy and Akut came to the ground to take up their interrupted journey once more.

The old ape scolded the boy in the language that was their common heritage. "It is a lesson. If you would live, use your ears and eyes, but most of all your nose after this. That night the son of Tarzan was colder than he ever had been. The pajama trousers had not been heavy, but they had been heavier than nothing. And the next day he roasted in the hot sun, for again their way led them across wide and treeless plains.

For a month the two wandered on, the boy learning rapidly the laws of the jungle, his muscles adapting themselves to the new mode of life thrust upon them. He found it came quite naturally to him to swing through the trees. Even at great heights he was never dizzy, and when he had caught the knack of the swing and the release he could hurl himself through space from branch to branch with more agility than Akut could.

Son-26

After weeks of exposure came a toughening and hardening of his smooth, white skin, browning now beneath the sun and wind. He had removed his pajama jacket one day to bathe in a little stream too small to harbor crocodiles. While he and Akut were disporting themselves in the cool waters, a monkey dropped down from the everchanging trees and scampered away with the boy's single remaining article of civilization.

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For a time he was angry, but soon realized being half-clothed is more uncomfortable than being entirely naked, and he came to revel in the freedom of his unhampered state. Sometimes he would smile to imagine the surprise of his schoolmates could they but see him now. How they would envy him! He felt sorry for them even amid the comforts and luxuries of their English homes and happy with their mothers and fathers.

A most uncomfortable lump arose in the boy's throat as he thought of home and he saw a vision of his mother's face through a blur of mist that came unbidden to his eyes. Then it was that he urged Akut onward, for now they were headed westward for the coast. The old ape thought they were searching for a tribe of his kind, and the boy did not enlighten him as to his real plans when they would come to civilization.

One day as they were moving slowly along the banks of a river they came unexpectedly upon a native village. Some children were playing beside the water. The boy's heart leaped at sight of them —for over a month he had seen no human being. Even if they were black-skinned, were they not fellow creatures? He started toward them. Akut laid a warning hand upon his arm to hold him back, but he shook himself free and ran forward with a shout of greeting.

Son-27

The sound of his voice brought every head erect. Wide-eyed the children viewed him an instant, then with screams of terror fled toward the village. To the alarm came a score of warriors with hastily snatched spears. The boy halted, the glad smile fading from his face as with wild shouts the warriors ran toward him. Akut called to him to turn back. Instead, he raised his hand in a gesture of peace. A shower of spears answered it.

The missiles struck all about the boy, but none touched him. Again his spine tingled and the short hairs of his neck bristled. His eyes narrowed. Sudden hatred flared in them to wither the glad friendliness that had lighted them a moment before. With a low snarl, quite similar to a baffled beast, he turned and ran into the jungle. Akut awaited him in a tree. The wise old ape urged flight, knowing the sinewy black warriors would search for them.

But the son of Tarzan held back. Rage and hatred now consumed him. He wanted to fight yet he knew he could not meet these armed men with his naked hands. Moving slowly through the trees he could hear below him the savages advancing with shouts and cries. For a mile or so he followed above them. At last they turned back. One young warrior dropped behind his companions as they went down the narrow trail. A grim smile lit the boy's face.

Swiftly he hurried forward until he moved almost above the unsuspecting black, stalking him as Sheeta, the panther, stalks his prey. Suddenly and silently he leaped forward and downward upon the warrior's broad shoulders. As he landed, hurling the black heavily to the ground, his fingers sought and found the man's throat. The warrior struggled frantically in vain effort to dislodge the grim, silent thing clinging to him.

Son-28

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Hidden in the bush at one side of the trail, safe from the eyes of the searchers should they miss their fellow and return for him, the lad choked the life from his victim. Then a strange desire seized him. His whole being quivered and thrilled. Involuntarily he leaped to his feet and placed one foot upon the body of his kill. He raised his face to the heavens to voice a strange, weird cry surging within him.

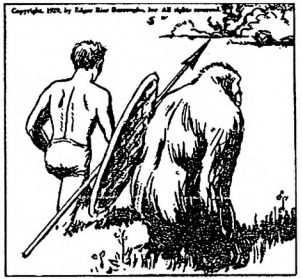
But no sound passed his lips—he just stood there a full minute, his face uplifted, his chest heaving to his pent emotions, like a statue of vengeance. The silence that marked the first great kill of the son of Tarzan was to typify all his future kills—just as the hideous victory cry of the bull-ape marked the kills of his mighty sire, Tarzan of the Apes. Akut, meantime, had turned back to search for the boy.

Soon the ape was startled to see a strange figure moving through the trees. It was the boy, yet could it be? In his hand was a long spear, down his back hung an oblong shield. On his arm and ankle were bands of brass and iron, while around his middle was twisted a loin cloth. A knife was thrust through its folds. The old ape could scarcely believe his eyes. The boy hastened forward and proudly recounted the details of his exploit.

They made a detour around the hostile village. Now for days the boy practiced with his spear until he gained a proficiency only attained by youthful muscles. Under Akut's guidance he came to know every jungle spoor and know the different beasts by scent. His nose could tell whether up-wind there were two lions or four. Much more the ape taught him—but far more was a species of intuition inherited from his father. He had come to love the jungle life.

Son-29

Days passed, and with traveling, hunting and climbing, the boy's muscles developed and his agility increased until even phlegmatic Akut marveled at his pupil's prowess. The boy, realizing his great strength, became careless. He strode through the jungle, his proud head erect, defying danger. When Akut took to the trees at first scent of Numa, the lad laughed in the face of the king of beasts and walked boldly past him.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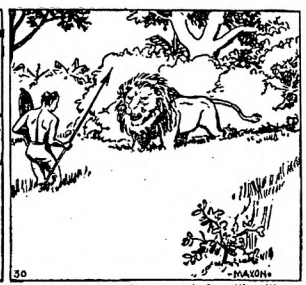
Good fortune was with him for a long time. The beasts he met were well-fed perhaps, or his very boldness so filled them with surprise that often he passed within a few paces of some great lion without arousing more than a warning scowl. But one day he met a lion who had not dined. They were walking across a little plain on which grew small clumps of bushes. The boy was the first to discover the lion's presence.

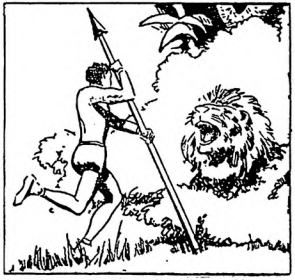
"Run, Akut," called the boy to the ape who was a few yards to his right. "Numa has hid in the bushes. Take to the trees, Akut! I, the son of Tarzan, will protect you," and the boy laughing, kept straight along his way which led close behind the brush where the lion lay concealed. The ape shouted to him to come away, but the lad only flourished his spear and executed an improvised war-dance to show his contempt for the king of beasts.



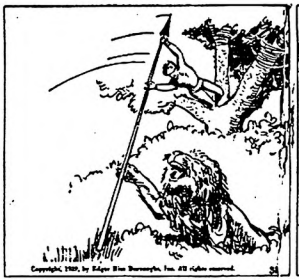
Closer and closer he approached until with a sudden angry growl the lion arose from his bed not ten paces away. He was a huge fellow, with a shaggy mane and blazing eyes above his great jaws. The boy, with only his pitifully inadequate spear, realized quickly that this lion was different from the others he had met. The nearest tree was several yards to his left. The lion would be upon him before he could make it. Escape seemed cut off.

Son-30

The feel of the long spear shaft in his hand and the sight of the thorn tree beyond the lion gave the lad an idea. It was a forlorn hope, but his only chance. So, pot waiting for the beast to charge, to the astonishment of Akut, he leaped swiftly toward the crouching lion. For a brief second was the lion motionless with surprise, and in that moment the son of Tarzan used an accomplishment of his school days, this time to save his life.



Straight for the savage brute he ran, his spear held butt foremost across his body. Akut shrieked in terror and amazement. The lion stood with wide, round eyes awaiting the attack, ready to rear upon his hind feet and receive this rash creature with blows that could crush a buffalo's skull. Just in front of the lion the boy placed the butt of his spear upon the ground. Before the bewildered beast could guess the trick it was too late.



For the boy gave a mighty spring and sailed over the lion's head into the thorn tree—safe, but bruised. Akut had never before seen a pole vault. Now he leaped up and down within the safety of his own tree screaming taunts and boasts at the discomfited Numa. The boy, torn and bleeding, waited a full hour before the angry brute gave up his vigil and strode majestically away. Then he came down from his painful position.

Several days the boy and the ape rested. The great anthropoid licked the tortured flesh of his human friend, lacerated by the tree's sharp thorns, and it soon healed. But never again did the son of Tarzan uselessly tempt fate. When he felt fit once more, they continued on to the coast and at last his much-dreamed-of moment arrived. Passing through the tangled forest he discovered something that set his heart leaping for joy.

Son-31

That which filled the lad with excitement was the fresh spoor of men—of white men, for among the prints of naked feet were the outlines of shoes. The trail marked the passage of a good-sized company headed north, probably toward some coast settlement, the boy thought. He was all eagerness to be off in pursuit. The old ape objected. He wanted nothing of men. To him the lad was a fellow ape, for he was the son of the king of apes.

He tried to dissuade the boy, but without success. A few hours later they came upon the rear guard of the white man's caravan he was so anxious to overtake. Stumbling along the tangled trail of those ahead, a dozen heavily laden blacks were being prodded mercilessly forward. On each side of them walked two giants, blond white men, both using heavy whips on the naked backs of the poor natives. The boy's cry of greeting died on his lips.

Even the great ape growled beneath his breath at the useless torture being inflicted. "So these are the creatures you would go with?" he muttered to the lad. "They ARE fiends," replied the boy, "but I will ask them where is the nearest port, and then, Akut, we can leave them." So saying he swung to the ground, starting at a brisk walk toward the "safari." He was a hundred yards away, perhaps, when one of the whites caught sight of him.

The man gave a shout of alarm, instantly leveling his rifle upon the boy and firing. The bullet struck just in front of its mark, scattering turf and leaves against the boy's legs. A second later the others were firing hysterically at him. Jack leaped into a tree, unhurt, the ape climbing excitedly after him. As the two disappeared, so quickly and in such manner, the white men and natives huddled together to determine just what to do.

Son-32

Days of panic-ridden flight through the jungle had filled Jenssen and Malbihn with jangling nerves and their native boys with unreasoning terror. Each new noise behind them sounded to their ears like the coming of the Sheik and his bloodthirsty followers. So, when the naked white warrior stepped silently out of the jungle, the shock had been enough to loose in action the pent nerves of Malbihn and he had fired the first shot.

But is developed that none of the caravan had seen clearly what they were fighting. One of the blacks even insisted the thing had been eleven feet tall, with a man's body and an elephant's head! After they had conquered their nervousness and came to investigate the enemy's position, in the gathering twilight, they found nothing. For by this time Akut and the son of Tarzan had retreated far from the unfriendly guns.

"The lesser beasts flee from me, the greater ones are ready to tear me in pieces," the boy murmured, half to himself. "Black men would kill me with spears. White men, men of my own kind, shoot at me and have driven me away. Has the son of Tarzan no friends?" The old ape drew closer to the boy. "There are the great apes," he said. "They only will be the friends of Akut's friend. You have seen men want nothing of you. Let us go to the great apes—our people!"

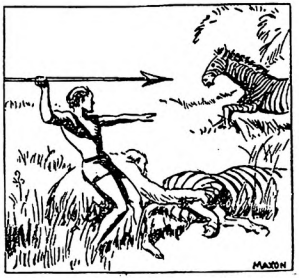
The two proceeded in silence for some time after Akut spoke. The boy was deep in thought, bitter thoughts in which hatred and revenge were uppermost. Finally he spoke: "Very well, Akut. We will find our friends, the great apes." Akut, who had long sensed that the boy wished to return to civilization, and was sorrowful because of that, now was overjoyed. A grunt of approval, however, was his only response as he busied himself searching for food.

Son-33

A year had passed since the two Swedes had been driven from the savage country where the Sheik held sway. That cruel chieftain had now been away a long time conducting a caravan of ivory and rubber far into the north. This interlude had been a happy and peaceful one for little Meriem. Today she sat under a large tree, playing as usual and whispering confidences to the battered head of Geeka, her grotesque doll.

Not even the villainous old hag Mabunu came near to pinch or beat her. Alone in this part of the village, the child tended Geeka, so absorbed that she did not note the gentle swaying of the branches of the tree above her as they bent to the body of the jungle creature creeping upon her. Two steady eyes looked down on her—unblinking, unwavering. Through the jungle, an hour's march away, the Sheik was returning homeward.

A year had passed also for the boy and Akut, the ape, since these same white men had fired upon them. For months they wandered deeper and deeper into the jungle. The year had done much for the youth. His mighty muscles were developed and he had become a creature of marvelous physical powers and mental cunning. So great was his strength that the powerful anthropoid, with whom he often engaged in mimic battle, was no longer a match for him.



Akut taught him to fight as the bull ape fights, nor was there ever a better pupil. As the two sought the almost extinct species of ape to which Akut belonged, they lived upon the best the jungle afforded. Their search for the elusive anthropoids who were to welcome them with open arms was at last rewarded. Deep in the jungle, buried far from the sight of men, one evening at a great distance they heard the beating of the drum of the great apes.

Son-34

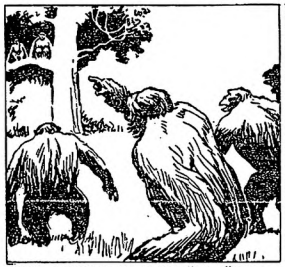
The boy and the ape were sleeping in the safety of a great tree when the booming sound smote upon their ears. Both awoke at once. Akut was the first to interpret the strange cadence. "The great apes!" he growled. "They dance the Dum-Dum. Come, Korak, son of Tarzan, let us go to our people." Months before Akut had given the boy this name. He could not master the man-given name of Jack. In the apes' language Korak means Killer.

Now the Killer arose upon the tree's branch and stretched his lithe young muscles. The ape stood up, too, squatting after the manner of his kind. Low growls rumbled from his great chest, growls of excited anticipation. The boy growled in harmony with the ape. He was happy and expectant. Now all thoughts of London and civilization were gone. Except for form and mental development, he was as much an ape as the great, fierce Akut.

Louder and louder came the sound of the drum's beating as the two came nearer to the dancing apes. Presently through a break in the foliage the whole savage scene burst upon the boy's eager eyes. To Akut it was a familiar sight, but Korak's nerves tingled as he looked. The great bulls were leaping in the moonlight about a flat-topped, earthen drum, which three old females were beating with resounding whacks from heavy sticks.

Akut knew the customs of his kind, and he was too wise to make their presence known until the frenzy of the dance had passed. When the drum was quiet and the tribe had feasted he would hail them. After a parley he and Korak would be accepted into membership, unless there might be some who would object. But Akut hoped there would be those who had known Tarzan. His dearest wish was that Korak, son of Tarzan, should become king of the apes.

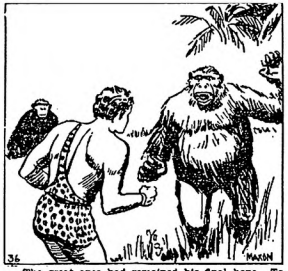
Son-35



Akut explained to Korak that these rites proclaimed the choosing of a new king. At last the brutes rested, their stomachs full. "Come slowly, Korak," Akut whispered. "Do as I do." Making their way through the trees, they stood on a bough overhanging one side of the amphitheater. Then Akut uttered a peculiar growl. Instantly a score of apes leaped to their feet. The new king-ape was the first to see the two figures upon the branch.

He growled ominously. His hair bristled and his legs stiffened, as with a jerking motion he lumbered toward the intruders, followed by a number of bulls. Akut did not wish to fight. He had come with the boy to cast his lot with the tribe. "I am Akut," he called down. "This is Korak. He is the son of Tarzan, who was king of the apes. I, too, was king of the apes beside the great waters. We are mighty fighters. Let us come in peace."

The king's little eyes grew crafty. He feared these two strangers. The sleek, brown, hairless body of the lad spelled "man," and man he hated. "Go away," he growled, "or I will kill you!" The eager lad standing behind the great Akut had been pulsing with happiness and anticipation. He wanted to leap down and show these hairy monsters he was one of them—their friend. Now the words of the king-ape filled him with indignation and sorrow.



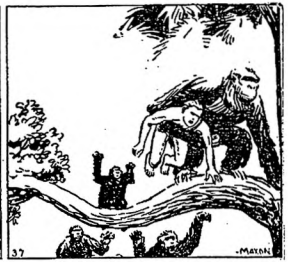
The great apes had remained his final hope. To them he looked for the companionship man had denied him. Suddenly rage overwhelmed him. The apes beneath him had formed in a half circle around the king, watching events interestedly. Before Akut could guess his intention or prevent it, the boy leaped to the ground directly in the path of the king, who had now worked himself up into a perfect frenzy of jealous fury.

Son-36

"I am Korak!" shouted the boy. "I came to live among you as a friend. You want to drive me away. Very well, I shall go; but before I go, I shall show you that the son of Tarzan is your master as was his father before him." The king ape stood motionless with surprise. Akut was equally surprised. Now he shouted excitedly for Korak to come back; for once the king ape's mighty jaws had closed on the boy's neck, it would be his end.

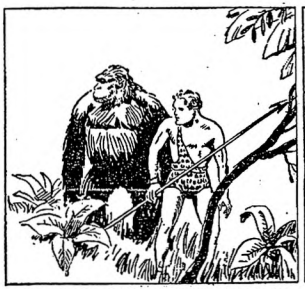
To leap to the boy's rescue would mean death for Akut, too; but the brave old ape never hesitated. Bristling and growling he leaped to the grass just as the king ape charged. Korak, too, leaped forward to meet the attack; but leaped crouching, beneath the outstretched arms. Quickly, with all the weight of his body and the strength of his trained muscles, he drove a clenched fist into the bull's stomach. The king ape groaned with pain.

When the king collapsed, howls of rage and dismay broke from the other apes, as with murder in their savage hearts they rushed upon Korak and Akut. Old Akut was too wise to risk any such unequal encounter and he knew it would be futile to call off the boy. To delay was fatal. There was but a single hope and Akut seized it. Grasping the lad around the waist, he lifted him bodily and ran swiftly toward a low hanging branch.



Close on their heels swarmed the hideous mob; but old as Akut was and burdened by the struggling Korak, he made the tree, grasped a limb, and with agility of a little monkey swung to temporary safety. Then on through the jungle night until the roaring apes were left far behind. The boy was furious. "Why did you drag me away?" he cried. "You are alive," said Akut. "Had I not brought you we would both have perished. Even lions fear the maddened apes!"

Son-37



After his inhospitable reception by the great apes, Korak roamed the jungle unhappily for days, unsatisfied vengeance smouldering in his breast. A week he remained in the vicinity of the apes' amphitheater hoping to meet the king ape. But finally the constant search for food led him several miles away.

Korak advanced cautiously a few yards and leaped nimbly into a tree. Akut followed close. Neither had made a noise that human ears could hear a dozen yards off. Stopping often to listen they crept forward through the trees. Both seemed greatly puzzled. Finally Korak caught a glimpse of a palisade and be-

Woe betide the unfortunate villager whom Korak the Killer came upon in his present mood! Leaping lightly from one jungle tree to another, he came silently above the village. His ears told him some human being was near and he held his spear ready. Now he saw the owner of the voice that rose to him

Now arose a great noise on the opposite side of the village. Men, women and children ran toward the gate through which trooped a motley crowd of black slaves, Arab camel drivers, donkeys, goats, sheep and horses. A tall, sour, old man led the caravan. Korak saw him question an old hag; she pointed to the place where the girl played. "Her father," thought

Son-38

Korak sighed, thinking of his own father and mother in far away London, as he waited for the glad reunion of father and daughter. The Arab was striding softly toward the girl; now he stood directly behind her. With a start the child glanced quickly up. Korak, amazed, saw her great, dark eyes fill with terror, saw her try to crawl away, and saw the Arab's cruel lips curl in a grim smile as he kicked and struck her brutally.

Above them, in the tree, a beast crouched where a moment before there had been a boy—a beast with dilated nostrils and bared fang—a beast that trembled with rage. The Sheik was stooping again to reach for the girl when the Killer dropped to the ground at his side. Astonished by this sudden apparition out of the clear air, he took a backward step. Korak's clenched fist, backed by terrific power, landed full on his face.

Bleeding and senseless the Sheik sank to the earth. Korak turned to the girl, standing wide-eyed and frightened. In an involuntary gesture of protection the Killer threw an arm about her shoulders and waited for the Sheik to regain consciousness. He spoke to her in English, then in the ape's language. She did not answer. Instead she made some motions. Korak understood her. She meant the Sheik would kill her for this.

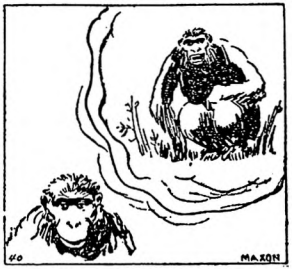
Then she came to his side again and stood trembling. She did not fear him. Had he not saved her from a terrific beating? Never, in her memory, had another so befriended her. She looked into his face. It was a boyish, handsome face, nut-brown like her own. She admired the spotted leopard skin that circled his lithe body from one shoulder to his knees; envied him the metal ornaments he wore. And Korak looked at the girl!

Son-39

Like most youths of his age, Korak held girls in a species of contempt. But could he leave this one here perhaps to be murdered by the villainous old Sheik? No! Yet how could he take her into the jungle with him? She would probably scream at her own shadow. Several minutes he stood lost in thought. Wistfully the girl watched her new friend, then laid her slim, brown hand on his arm. Korak

"Come," he said. "The jungle is kinder than man. You shall live in the jungle. Korak and Akut will protect you." She did not understand his words, but as he led her from the prostrate Sheik, trustfully her little arm crept about his waist. Beneath the great tree he lifted her, threw her lightly across his shoulders and leaped nimbly into its branches. Her arms clung about his neck and Korak's left

And so Meriem entered the jungle with Korak, trusting this stranger who had befriended her, but knowing nothing of the future. The two had gone but a short distance when she spied the great ape and pointed toward him with a half-stifled scream. "Ah," thought Akut, "the Killer has taken a mate." The youth deposited his burden upon a large limb, where she clung desperately. "She will go with us"



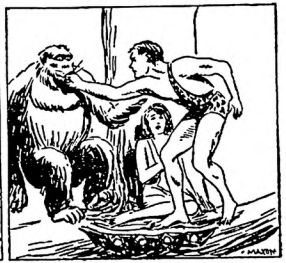
Akut did not want to be burdened by the young of man, and this one looked hopelessly unfit. She couldn't even sit in a tree! But if the Killer wanted her—all right. Akut certainly didn't want her. Her skin was too smooth and hairless, her face most unattractive. Not at all like a certain lovely she he had seen at the Dum-Dum dance. There was beauty for one! A generous mouth, such lovely yellow fangs,

Son-40

Meriem spent an evening and a night of terror. Once they hid her while they hunted. Her natural terror at being left alone in the awful jungle was submerged in a greater horror as she saw the handsome face of her preserver contort in a bestial snarl. Nor could she eat the meat the two so evidently relished and offered her. So Korak brought her some luscious fruit.

The sleeping problem vexed Korak. He knew she could not balance herself in the crotch of a tree and sleep as he and the ape did. To sleep on the ground would make her a prey for prowling beasts. There was but one solution—he cut some bougis and made a bed for her to sleep in. With Akut on one side of her and the boy upon the other, she was guarded by two faithful sentries. But even with her faith in Korak, terror of the jungle kept her awake half the night.

The sun was well up when she awoke. At sight of the ape's hairy back she shrank away, then realized some one was holding her, and turning her head she saw the smiling eyes of the youth regarding her. Akut saw she was afraid of him. He rather enjoyed that fact. He extended his huge hand, as though to seize her. She shrank still farther away. Akut's eyes were busy drinking in the humor of the situation. He did not see the narrowing eyes of Korak.



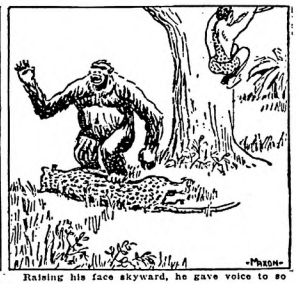
The ape's fingers were about to close on the girl's arms when the youth rose suddenly with a short, vicious growl. His fist flew out, landing on the snout of the astonished ape. With an explosive bellow, Akut reeled backward and tumbled from the tree. Korak glared down upon him. As the brute scrambled to his feet, there came a sudden swish in the bushes, then a mass of spotted fur shot straight for Akut's back It was a leopard.

Son-41

As the leopard leaped for the great ape, Meriem gasped in surprise and horror, not for the impending fate of Akut but for the boy's. A minute before he had angrily struck his strange companion. Now with drawn knife the youth leaped far out, and as the leopard was in the very act of sinking fangs

With horrid snarls it rolled on its back, clutching and clawing in an effort to dislodge the antagonist who was biting at its neck and knifing its sides. Akut had sprung into the tree with agility little short of marvelous in so heavy a beast. But when he saw what was going on below him, personal differences were forgotten and he dropped to the

Shrieking, snarling and growlings rent the jungle air. It was the boy's knife which finally decided the fight. As the fierce feline shuddered convulsively and gave its final breath, Korak and the ape faced each other over its prostrate carcass. Korak pointed to the girl. "Leave her alone, Akut, she is mine!" The ape grunted, blinked his little eyes



Raising his face skyward, he gave voice to so horrid a scream that the girl shuddered. It was the victory cry of the bull ape that has made a kill. The boy looked on in silence; then he leaped into the tree again to the girl's side. Akut presently rejoined them and busied himself licking his wounds. For many months after this, the strange

Son-42

During these months, Meriem slowly learned the rudiments of apes' language, perfected herself in jungle craft and often now helped Korak and Akut while they hunted. The great anthropoid had come to accept the girl on a footing of equality, though for the most part he avoided her. The youth was always kind to her. He had constructed a light little shelter in the swaying branches. Here she slept. The Killer and the ape perched nearby.

High in her leafy bower, Meriem no longer feared the leopard, though there was always Hista the snake to strike terror to one's soul and the great baboons living nearby who barked at any of the trio when they passed near them. After the construction of the shelter the activities of the three became localized. They ranged less widely, always returning to their own tree at nightfall. A river flowed nearby. Fish and game were plentiful.

Existence settled into the routine of sleep and food. They looked no further ahead than today. Korak had given up hope of returning to civilization. He had wandered so far inland that now he knew he was completely lost in the mazes of the jungle. Since the coming of Meriem he had found the thing he most had missed—human companionship. They were friends, companions, happy and innocent children leading an idyllic life together.

The little girl idolized Korak as she might an older brother. Love was a thing unknown to either, but as the youth neared manhood it was inevitable that it should come to him, as it did to every other savage male. Meriem could now swing through the trees with the agility of the Killer himself, surefooted, lithe and fearless. Korak was very proud of her and even old Akut would grunt his approval of this little "human she."

Son-43

Korak would not permit Meriem to go unarmed. A light spear and a long knife he taught her to use were her weapons of offense and defense. Sometimes she even hunted alone. Her figure, rounding into the fulness of an early maturity, took on the lines of a Greek goddess and as she strode through the jungle fastness, she was as

In the stamping ground the trio were familiar figures. The little monkeys knew them well, often coming close to chatter and frolic. When Akut and Korak were away the small folk would tug at Meriem's ornaments and play about as she fed them, helping to pass the long hours until Korak's return. Nor were they worthless as friends. They

One day Meriem had stretched her lithe body, catlike, along a swaying branch when the sudden plunge of an excited little monkey, landing on her shoulders, startled her. "Climb," he cried, "climb! The Mangani are coming." The language of the great apes being similar to that of the monkeys. Meriem understood, but she only glanced lazily over

But the monkey only screamed his warning more lustily from a higher terrace. "Mangani" was their word for apes. To Meriem, Akut and Korak were apes. "They are returning," she thought, as she heard the sound of approaching bodies swinging through the trees. Meriem decided to play a joke

Son-44

Meriem opened her eyes. Her heart stood still! Creeping silently toward her was a huge bull ape that she never had seen before. Behind him was another like him. With the agility of a squirrel Meriem was on her feet. At the same instant the great bull lunged for her. Leaping from limb to limb the girl fled through the jungle while close behind her came the two great apes. Above them raced a bevy of screaming, chattering monkeys.

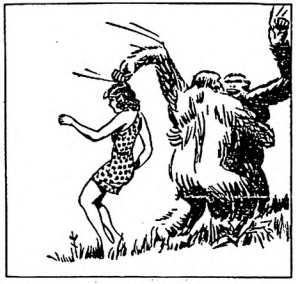
The little creatures hurled taunts and insults at the Mangani, encouragement and advice to the girl. From tree to tree swung Meriem working ever upward toward the smaller branches which would not bear the weight of her pursuers. Faster and faster came the apes after her. The clutching fingers of the foremost were upon her again and again, but she eluded them by sudden bursts of speed or reckless chances as she leaped.

Now after a particularly daring leap, the swaying branch she grasped bent low beneath her weight and with a rending sound ripped from the tree trunk. Releasing her hold Meriem dropped through the foliage, clutching for a new support. She had fallen many times before and had no terror of it; only the delay appalled her. Rightly too, for one of the huge apes dropped at her side and a great, hairy paw went about her waist.

Almost at once the other ape reached his companion's side. He made a lunge for Meriem, but her captor swung her to one side, bared his fighting fangs and growled ominously. Meriem struggled to free herself, striking at the hairy breast, fastening her strong, white teeth in one shaggy forearm. The ape cuffed her viciously across the face, then he had to turn his attention to his fellow who quite evidently desired the prize for his own.

Son-45

Burdened by the struggling Meriem, the great ape could not fight to advantage upon the swaying bough, so he dropped to the ground beneath. Quickly the other ape followed and here they battled, now and then giving up the duel to pursue and recapture the girl who took every chance to break away in attempted escape. But always they



Often the girl came in for blows intended for a hairy foe and finally she was felled, lying unconscious while the apes, relieved of the distraction of detaining her by force, fought one another in fierce and terrible combat. Above them screamed the monkeys in a frenzy of excitement. Back and forth over the battle field flew countless birds of

The larger bull was slowly tearing his antagonist to pieces. They rolled on the ground, biting and striking. Then erect on their hind legs they pulled and tugged like human wrestlers. Meriem, through it all, lay still and unconscious on the ground. At last the apes went down for the last time. Then the larger one arose alone and shook

Then he stood upon his victim and gave tongue to his hideous victory challenge. The gorgeous birds fled in all directions at the terrifying noise. The great ape waddled again to the girl's side. He turned her over and sniffed at her face. She lived. He stooped, and, lifting the girl to his shoulders, made off through the jungle. Korak, returning

Son-46

Korak knew something serious had happened. He called, but no Meriem answered. In the distance the jabbering of the monkeys was growing fainter. Korak swung rapidly in their direction, soon overtaking the rearmost. At sight of him they fell to screaming anew, pointing downward ahead of them. A moment later he came in sight of the cause of their rage. His heart stood still as he saw the limp body of the girl across the ape's shoulders.

That she was dead he did not doubt! There arose within him something he did not try to interpret; but all at once his whole world seemed centered in that tender, graceful body hanging so pitifully limp and helpless across the bulging shoulders of the ape. He knew then that Meriem was his sun, his moon, his stars—with her going had gone all light, and warmth, and happiness. A groan escaped his lips; and after that a series of hideous roars.

He dropped like a plummet in mad descent toward the fleeing ape. The bull turned at the first sound of this new and menacing voice and as Korak saw his ugly visage a new flame was added to his rage. For the creature before him was none other than the king ape who months before had driven the Killer from the great anthropoids to whom he had looked for friendship. And at the same instant the king ape recognized Korak!

Dropping his prize to the ground, with lowered head he rushed headlong for this smooth-skinned creature who was daring to question his right to his prey. Down they went, tearing and striking. Korak forgot his knife. Rage such as his could only be satisfied by the feel of hot flesh between rending fangs. He was fighting for a woman of his own kind. It was then Meriem opened her eyes: "Korak," she cried, "My Korak!"

Son-47

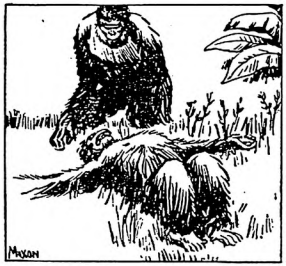
With flashing eyes, as she recognized Korak, the girl arose. Nearby lay the Killer's spear—forgotten. Meriem saw and snatched it up. No faintness overcame her in face of this primeval battle. She was excited, but cool and unafraid. Was not her Korak fighting a Mangani that would have stolen her?

He seemed to be looking at Meriem through new eyes. Had she changed so suddenly within the few hours of his absence? How tall and fine she was! How long it had been since he had found her in her father's village, a little Arab girl, he did not know. Time does not matter in the jungle and he kept no

Korak's eyes went wide and then closed to narrow slits as they glared down at the abysmal brute at his feet. When next his glance rose to Meriem's face, a slow flush suffused his own. Now, indeed, was he looking at her through new eyes—the eyes of a man looking at a maid! He came close to her, the love-light

"Meriem," he whispered, and his voice was husky. "Meriem!" Suddenly he crushed her to him. She looked up into his face laughing, and then he bent and kissed her. Even then she did not understand. She could not recall ever being kissed before. It was very nice. She thought it was Korak's way of showing how glad he was. Korak wanted to say something.

Son-48



Akut, with a low growl of excitement, came crashing through the underbrush. He paid no attention to Meriem and Korak but with hair bristling began strutting, stiff-legged, about the fallen ape. Something stirred in his little brain. Something which the sight and smell of this great bull had aroused. It awakened in the heart of Akut a longing for the companionship of his own kind. So Korak was not alone undergoing a change.

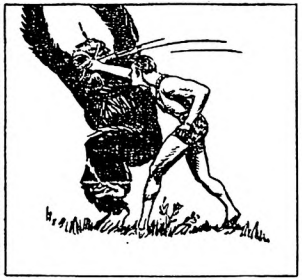
Of the three, Meriem alone underwent no change. Always she had loved Korak. He was her "big brother." She still loved him—as a sister. Very proud she was of him, too. Never was there other jungle creature so strong, so brave or handsome as her Korak. Suddenly Akut gave a deeper growl —the one of warning. Korak looked quickly up from the glorious vision of Meriem's sweet face. Now his other faculities awoke. His ears, his nostrils were on the alert.

Something was coming! The Killer moved to Akut's side. The three stood, statue-like, gazing into the jungle's leafy tangle. Presently a great ape broke through the thicket. Seeing them he halted, giving a grunt back over his shoulder. A moment later came cautiously another ape, soon followed by others, both bulls and females with young, until two score hairy monsters stood glaring at the silent group of three. Akut was the first to speak.

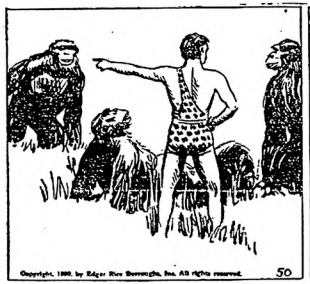
He pointed at the body of the dead bull. "Korak, mighty fighter, has killed your king," he said. "There is none greater than Korak, son of Tarzan. Now, Korak is king. What bull is mightier than Korak?" It was a challenge! The apes chattered among themselves, taking counsel. At last a young bull in the prime of his strength, stepped forward, bristling, growling, terrible. He was enormous. Even natives seldom see these great, hairy primordial men.

Son-49

Korak advanced to meet the monster. He, too, was growling. In his mind a plan was forming. To close with this powerful, untired brute, after having just passed through a terrific battle with another of his kind, would be to tempt defeat. He must find an easier way to victory. Crouching,



Korak did not move until the great arms opened to embrace him. Then he dropped low beneath them, swung a terrific right to the side of the beast's jaw as he side-stepped his rushing body, and swinging quickly about, stood ready over the fallen king. Each time the beast struggled to rise



The apes who had cheered on their king, now jeered at him. One more terrific punch from the Killer and then from the stubborn bull's lips came faintly the word "Kagoda!" meaning "I surrender." "Then rise and go with your people," said Korak. An old bull came slowly toward the Killer: "You have beaten our king. We do not want him now,

Akut did not wish to be separated from Korak. He wanted Meriem and Korak to live with the tribe. But Korak knew Meriem would never be safe there. "We will live near you," he said, "but we shall not dwell among you." Akut at first refused to leave his human friend. But the call of blood would not be denied. He saw the admir-

Son-50

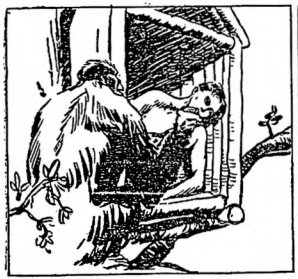
Korak had come to Meriem's aid, direct from plundering a native village where he had taken arrows, ornaments and food. Even the natives' superstitious fear of the white devil who hunted with an ape was overcome this time by their determination to rid the jungle of him once and for all. The fleetest warriors led by Kovudoo, crafty and cunning, set out in pursuit of Akut and Korak. For hours the tireless trackers followed their trail.

The black savages came to the scene of the mighty struggle just as Akut had left with the tribe. The sight of the young girl held the savage chief spellbound. Was she not the daughter of the Sheik with whom his men sometimes traded? Surely he had seen her before! "If this is she," Kovudoo thought, "the Sheik will pay me well for her return." Then he spied Geeka, the doll his own brother had made Meriem, years before, and was certain!

Korak's arm was around Meriem; love raced hot through his young veins. In all the world there was but one girl. He drew her close and covered her lips with kisses . . . And then from behind them broke a hideous bedlam of savage war cries and a score of shrieking blacks were upon them. An avalanche of barbed missiles flew. Korak went down, pierced through the shoulder and one leg. Meriem, they had intentionally spared.

Now they rushed forward to finish Korak and made good the girl's capture. But as they came, there came also from another point in the jungle the great Akut and at his heels the huge bulls of his new kingdom. Kovudoo seized Meriem and succeeded in escaping. Akut rushed to Korak's side; tore the spears from his flesh and licked the wounds, then carried him to the treetop's shelter. And there Korak lay, for days, helpless with fever.

Son-51



The days dragged their weary lengths along for Korak, when he began to recover. During his illness, the apes had hunted close by, that they might protect him. The great-hearted Akut brought juicy fruits which helped to slake Korak's thirst and allay his fever. Little by little his powerful constitution overcame the effects of the spear thrusts, the wounds healed, his strength returned

Always in his delirium had he called for Meriem. Now his first rational thoughts were of her. For her he must live! What had the blacks done to her? All the hideous possibilities of the girl's fate suggested themselves to him out of his knowledge of the customs of Kovudoo's tribe. Often he thought the day would never come when his strength would return sufficiently for him to make

Many days' march had Kovudoo gone with his fair captive before he reached home and there placed Meriem in a dirty hut under strong guard. Food she had plenty, and a certain amount of liberty, for the wily chieftain knew a healthy maiden would bring the largest ransom. On the day that Korak began his quest for Meriem, Kovudoo dispatched a fleet runner to the distant habitation of the Sheik to barter with him for his daugh-

The messenger never reached his destination! Two mean-faced white men again had come into the deep jungle, this time to trap baboons for a zoo in Germany. They were Jenssen and Malbihn, little altered in vicious nature since that day years before, when they and their "safari" had been so badly frightened by Korak and Akut. They had made camp beside a river along which lay the path Kovudoo's messenger must take on his mis-

Son-52

With the talkativeness of a native to other natives, Kovudoo's runner had unfolded his whole mission to the black servants of the two Swedes. They were not long in relating the matter to their masters. The result was that when the runner left their camp to continue his journey to the Sheik, he had scarcely passed from sight before there came the report of Jenssen's rifle and he rolled lifeless with a bullet in his back.

The next day the Swedes set out for Kovudoo's village bent on obtaining possession of the white girl whom the chief's runner had told them lay a captive there. They approached the old savage with friendly words upon their tongues and deep craft in their hearts. Their plans were well made. There was no mention of the white prisoner. They chose to pretend they were unaware Kovudoo had her. First they gave him little gifts.

As they talked, Malbihn mentioned, quite casually, that the Sheik was dead. Kovudoo showed interest and surprise. "You did not know it?" asked Malbihn. "That is strange. It was during the last moon." Kovudoo, not suspecting the lie, evinced much disappointment. No Sheik meant no ransom for the white girl. Now she was worthless, unless he utilized her for a feast. Then the wily old wretch conceived a strategic idea.

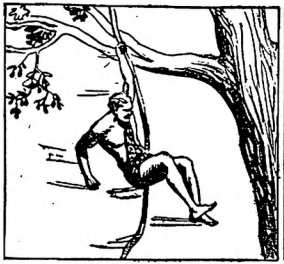
These white men were peculiar. They traveled far without women. "I know where there is a white girl," he said unexpectedly. "If you wish to buy her she may be had cheap." Malbihn shrugged. "We have troubles enough, Kovudoo, without being burdened by some old hag." "She is young, and very pretty," insisted the chief. "There are no such in all the Jungle," laughed Malbihn, winking at Jenssen. "Come," said Kovudoo, "I will show you."

The Swedes followed Kovudoo to a nearby hut. In the dim interior they saw the figure of a woman lying bound. "She must be a thousand years old, Kovudoo," said Malbihn and he turned away. "Wait," cried the savage, "it is dark in there. She is young. I will have her brought forth." As Meriem came out into the sunlight her beauty fairly took the breath away from the Swedes. With difficulty they suppressed their astonishment when

There could be no doubt; this girl was the same who had been stolen from the Sheik several years before. "Well," asked Kovudoo, "is she not young and beautiful?" "She is not old," replied Malbihn, pretending no interest. "But even so she would be a burden to us." Meriem stood looking straight at the white men. She expected nothing from them. They were to her as much enemies as the blacks. She feared them all. Malbihn addressed her in Arabic.

"Would you like to have us take you away from here?" he questioned. Slowly and dimly, as from a great distance recollection of the once familiar tongue returned to her. "I should like to be free," she said, "and go back to Korak. But not with you." Malbihn turned to Kovudoo. "She does not wish to go with us," he said. "You are men," returned the black. "Can you not take her by force?" Malbihn appeared to be turning the matter over in his mind.

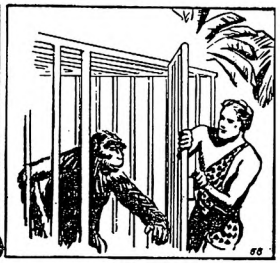
Then he answered: "It would only add to our troubles. No, Kovudoo, we do not wish her; but if you want to get rid of her we will take her away." Now Kovudoo knew he had made a sale, so he commenced to bargain. In the end Meriem passed into the possession of the two Swedes in exchange for six yards of calico, three empty brass cartridge shells, and a shiny, new jack-knife from New Jersey. And all but Meriem were more than pleased with the bargain.



Korak, again his old self, and impatient at the weeks he had been forced to lose, set out to find Meriem. Eagerly he took to the high-flung upper terraces of the great forest. How exhilarating it was to swing once more from tree to tree; to test the prowess of his mighty muscles! Yet life would lack its sweetness until he found his Meriem. That evening, he was attracted by a band of baboons, barking and jabbering.

Curiosity tempted Korak from his path. A few miles off, he came upon the scene of the uproar. In a steel cage a huge baboon fought to free himself, beating in futile rage against the rigid bars. Upon the outside, several hundred infuriated fellows were tearing and tugging, helplessly trying to aid him. Korak was amazed. This trap meant the presence of white men. He had believed no whites were within a thousand miles of him.

Presently an idea flashed through Korak's brain. He knew he was a match for many warriors; but he could not, unaided, overcome an entire tribe, not even for his beloved Meriem. Perhaps these baboons would help him against Kovudoo's men! He could speak the language of the baboon. It was identical with that of the great apes. Raising his voice he called to them: "I am Korak the Killer! I will help you free your king."



The baboons heard him in silence while he bargained with them, offering freedom for their king in exchange for their help. The imprisoned baboon was ready to promise anything. He and his tribe would go with Korak. The fastenings of the trap-door that had eluded the mental powers of the baboons, yielded their secret immediately to the human intelligence of Korak, and a moment later the king baboon stepped forth to liberty.

Son-55

Once enlisted in the adventure, the baboons became quite enthusiastic about it. They set off with Korak immediately. They traveled swiftly, but the ape-man found no difficulty in keeping up with them. They made a tremendous racket as they passed through the jungle, to let their enemies think a great herd was approaching. For when the baboons go in large numbers there is no jungle creature who cares to molest them.

For two days the party raced through the savage country. Korak and the king baboon were in the lead. Mid-afternoon they reached Kovudoo's village, sunk in the quiet of the great equatorial sunheat. Utter silence reigned. Korak, creeping stealthily, entered a tree that overhung the palisade. The pack were close upon his heels. The time had come! Raising his face toward the sky, he gave voice to a single cry. It was the signal.

In response, a thousand hairy bulls leaped screaming and barking into the village of the terrified blacks. Warriors came out from every hut. Mothers and children fled before the horrid horde pouring into the village street. Kovudoo marshaled his men about him. He leaped and yelled to arouse their courage, but the blacks were struck with dismay at the very sight of this white-skinned youth leading the vanguard of baboons.

For an instant they held their ground, hurling their spears at the advancing multitude; but before they could fit arrows to their bows they wavered, gave, and turned in terrified rout. Into their ranks, upon their backs, sinking strong fangs into the muscles of their necks, sprang the baboons and first among them, most ferocious and most terrible, was Korak, the Killer, son of Tarzan, his blind fury protecting him by its very ferocity.

Son-56

At the village gates through which the blacks poured in panic, Korak left them to the tender mercies of his allies and turned eagerly to find Meriem. In scores of filthy huts he searched, becoming more disheartened as he found each empty. At last to his mind came the despairing conviction —Meriem had been killed. A wave of rage surged through him against those he believed were responsible for her end. Revenge, at least, was his!

In the distance he could hear the snarling of the baboons mixed with the screams of their victims, and toward them he made his way. Swift, relentless, terrible, he hurled himself upon the savage warriors of Koyudoo. Like a lion he was here, there, everywhere, striking mighty blows from hard fists, with the precision of the trained fighter. Again and again he was upon a warrior and gone to another before an effective blow could be dealt him.

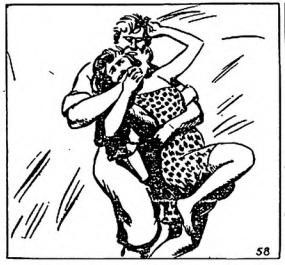
Finally it was the simple superstitious minds of his foemen that decided the combat. This white warrior, who consorted with fierce baboons, who growled and snarled and snapped like a beast, was not human! He was a forest demon, a god of evil whom they had offended, and who had come out of his lair deep in the jungle to punish them. It was useless to offer further resistance. Those who could fled, until not one remained alive enough to fight.

Korak, panting, paused for want of victims. The baboons too had tired with battle. And thus it befell that Korak drove from their homes the only people who might have aided him in his search for Meriem. Sick at heart he realized now to the full what she had meant to him. Brooding and despondent he took leave of the baboons, taking his solitary way into the deepest jungle. And all the while Meriem was scare a hundred miles away.

Son-57

After selling Meriem, the native chief demanded of the girl's new masters that they leave his village next morning early. He told them of her savage mate who would surely attempt her rescue. The Swedes needed no urging to hasten them on toward the Sheik's country. Already they were gloating over the gold they would receive from him in exchange for the lovely prize luck had thrown across their path. Two days they marched.

During this hard trek across the African plains, Malbihn feasted his eyes upon the face and figure of the beautiful captive. His desire to possess her for himself became even greater than his greed for the ransom money. The fourth evening they pitched camp. Meriem began to give up hope. Why did not Korak come to her? She had been left alone until near midnight when Malbihn entered her tent. The look of a beast was on his face.



Like a trapped creature Meriem shrank from the approaching man. She saw his hands extended, claw-like, to seize her; heard his breath come quickly. Then she screamed—loud and shrill, once, twice, a third time before Malbihn could leap across the tent and throttle her cries with his brute strength. Then she fought him. Beneath her rounded curves, and fine, soft skin lay the muscles of a young lioness. The man found her desperate.

But Malbihn was of giant strength and stature and he was brutal; Slowly he subdued the girl's fighting fury. Meriem still fought back but she was growing weaker from the choking fingers at her throat. Her cries had awakened Jenssen. Long suspicious of his partner, he guessed rightly what might be happening. With a muttered curse he dashed from his tent. Out in the jungle, another heard faintly the screams and broke into a rapid run.

Son-58

A hunter with a score of sleek, black warriors had halted to listen after Meriem's first outcry. He was not even aware of the presence of white men other than himself in this remote and savage section. When silence followed her third scream, the stranger also hastened toward the voice he knew was that of a woman in distress. Jenssen reached the scene first, entering the tent just as Malbihn was showering blows upon the girl.

Malbihn, interrupted, dropped his victim and turned to meet Jenssen's infuriated charge. He whipped a revolver from his hip. Jenssen, anticipating the other's move, drew almost simultaneously, and both men fired at once. Jenssen was still moving toward his partner at the time, but at the flash of the explosion he stopped, staggered and fell. Malbihn then deliberately put two more bullets into his friend's body at close range.

He stood over the fallen man and kicked him viciously; then returned to Meriem. Again he seized her, and at the same instant the tent flaps opened silently. A tall, white man entered. He crossed the tent quickly, stepping over Jenssen's body and the first intimation Malbihn had that he was not to carry out his evil designs, was a heavy hand upon his shoulder. He wheeled to face a black-haired, grey-eyed stranger clad in khaki.

Malbihn reached for his gun, but the stranger's hand was quicker, and a second later he was holding the giant Swede in a grasp of steel. Malbihn raged and fought only to be twisted about and held at arm's length. Then he shouted to his men to come and kill this stranger. But instead of his own slaves a dozen powerful, clean-limbed blacks, not at all like the crew that followed the Swede, entered and Malbihn was speedily made powerless.

Son-59

"I know now who you are," said the stranger to Malbihn. "And such as you are not wanted in our country. I will spare your life but the next time you see me, remember who I am." He spoke a name into the scoundrel's ear that filled the Swede with wide-eyed terror, before he was sent sprawling through the tent door. Changing his tone, the stranger address Meriem in a tongue she did not understand. She replied in Arabic.

At once he put his questions in that language. "They were taking me away from Korak," was all she answered. "Who are your people? Who is Korak?" he asked, looking at her strange, barbaric garments wonderingly. "Why, Korak is an ape. I have no other people. Korak and I live in the jungle alone since Akut went to be king of the apes. I am Meriem. I too am an ape." The stranger watched her closely and a pitying light came into his eyes.

Gaining her confidence, he learned more of Meriem's story, but in the end he was as much mystified as in the beginning. He knew the jungle well; knew that men had lived alone and naked among the savage beasts for years; but a girl! It was not possible! He guessed that her Korak and their life among the apes was but a figment of a disordered mind. He could not allow this poor, insane child to wander longer amid the jungle.

At last he persuaded her to return with him to his "village" or "douar" as he called it in Arabic. "There my wife will take care of you until we can find Korak or Korak finds us," he explained. "Korak will find his way to me," the girl said simply. "Let us go to your 'douar'." On the fifth day they came suddenly upon a great plain and from the edge of the forest the girl saw in the distance a sight that caused her to draw back.

Son-60

Meriem saw a bungalow set in palm trees and the many buildings of a well-ordered African farm. Knowing nothing of civilization she looked in wonder at the peaceful scene. "Where are we? Let me go. I am afraid, Bwana," she said, using the name the natives called their master. "That is my home and there you will be safer than in the jungle," replied the man. "You are only a little girl. It is better for you to stay with us a while."

Meriem laughed: "The jungle is my father and mother. It has been kinder to me than have men. I love it. I would rather die than leave it forever; but your 'douar' is close beside the jungle. You have been good to me. I will do as you wish and remain here to wait the coming of my Korak." Shortly before they reached the house, a dozen gaunt wolfhounds ran barking toward them, their appearance savage and unfriendly in the extreme.

Each in turn sniffed at Meriem who displayed not the slightest fear of them. Her slim fingers grasped the collars of two and with one on either side she walked up the path where a woman in white was coming forward to meet them. There was more fear now in the girl's eyes than there had been in the presence of strange men or savage beasts. Meriem saw that the woman was beautiful. Sweetness and goodness marked her countenance.

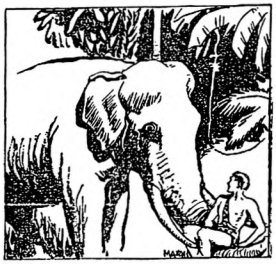
The man kissed the woman fondly, and then, taking the girl's hand, said, "This is Meriem, my dear," briefly telling her in Arabic the story of the jungle waif. When the woman came and put her arms about Meriem and kissed her, something snapped in Meriem's heart and she wept as she had never wept before. Tears of relief and joy that she could not fathom. Thus came Meriem out of the jungle into a home of culture and refinement.

Son-61

A year passed quickly for Meriem in her new home. "Bwana" and "My Dear," as she had first heard the white man and his wife addressed and the names which she still called them, became as father and mother to her. She was sixteen now, though she might easily have passed for nineteen, and she was very good to look upon, with her black hair and her tanned skin and all the freshness and

Yet scarce an hour passed that did not bring its recollection of Korak and its yearning to see him again. No longer did she talk of him though, for Bwana had sent his men away in a month's search for Korak. They had found Kovudoo's village as Meriem had described it but not a single native was there. Nor were there signs of ape or ape-man and Meriem knew that "My Dear" and "Bwana" believed that Korak had never existed.

It was a long year for Korak, alone in the deepest jungle. He had no hope that Meriem lived after he had failed to find her in Kovudoo's village. He filled his days with labor and excitement that he might forget his misery in exhausted sleep. A year he led his solitary roaming life. Occasionally he fell in with Akut and his tribe, hunting with them for a day or so, or he would travel to the hill country where the baboons always welcomed him.



But most of all he was with Tantor, the elephant; the great, grey battleship of the jungle. The life of the huge beasts interested and amused Korak, taking his mind from his own grief and he came to love them as he had not loved even the great apes. One gigantic tusker in particular was his favorite. He came when Korak called, and, at a gesture, would wind his trunk about the youth's body, lifting him affectionately to his broad neck.

Son-62

One day followed another with monotonous sameness for Korak, living with his elephant companions in the forest glade. But for Meriem—his Meriem—a whole new world seemed to unfold itself daily. She spoke English now instead of Arabic. She could read and write it together with French. Whole phrases of that language came easily to her out of some mysterous past. Today she thrilled over a new excitement that was about to happen.

Visitors were coming! A party of English and Americans had accepted Bwana's invitation to spend a month of hunting with him. Meriem was all expectancy, wondering what they would be like, until at last they arrived. The youngest member of the group was the Hon. Morison Baynes, bored with his riches and the pleasures offered by his social contacts. Nature had favored him with a splendid physique and a handsome face.

Meriem was at first shy and reserved in the presence of the strangers. Her benefactors had seen fit to ignore mention of her strange past and merely presented her as their ward. The guests found her charming. She was vivacious, sweet and unassuming, and a never exhausted storehouse of quaint and interesting jungle lore. Morison Baynes was attracted to her from the first, especially as they were the only unmarried couple there.

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And Meriem, entirely unaccustomed to the companionship of such as Baynes, was fascinated by him. They rode often together and his tales of the great, gay cities with which he was familiar filled her with wonder and admiration. With the actual presence of the young Englishman the image of Korak became less real, almost a memory. To that memory she was loyal, but what weight has a memory in the presence of a fascinating reality?

Son-63

Meriem never went with Bwana's guests upon a hunt. She could find no pleasure in killing for mere sport. On these occasions she would accompany the riders across the plains, then ride into the jungle, and there take to the trees. For hours she would revel in the unalloyed pleasures of a return to the wild, free existence of her earlier years, leaping and swinging through the trees, or stretching comfortably upon a branch, dreaming.

Today the Hon. Morison Baynes, returning toward evening from the hunt, saw Meriem's horse tethered near the jungle's edge. He galloped to the animal's side, dismounted and on foot entered the trail. He had gone but a short distance when he heard a great jabbering in a nearby tree. Coming closer he saw a band of baboons and to his amazement he also saw a girl swing ape-like into the tree below the beasts who were quarreling over some cloth.

He was about to put a bullet through the nearest baboon that seemed about to leap upon her when he heard the girl speak. Then he almost dropped his rifle in surprise; he recognized Meriem. A strange jabbering identical with that of the apes broke from her lips. The baboons were evidently equally surprised for they stopped their snarling and slowly one approached and gave her back the articles they had stolen while she dreamed.

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For several more minutes the girl carried on what could be nothing less than a conversation. The baboons chattered to her and she chattered back. The Hon. Morison Baynes mopped his perspiring brow and made his way back to his horse. When Meriem emerged from the jungle a few minutes later she found him there, looking at her with wide eyes in which were both wonder and terror. They were half way home before either spoke.

Son-64

Morison Baynes's thoughts were certainly upsetting him. This lovely creature riding by his side—he had seen climbing and swinging through trees and actually conversing with grotesque baboons! Beautiful she was and very desirable; yet after all what did he really know of her? Before he realized it he had blurted out: "I saw you in the trees with the baboons!" "Yes?" laughed Meriem, "the baboons are among my very best friends."

And then, because she saw the horror that the man felt at her answer reflected in his face, Meriem rather enjoyed shocking him further. "Yes," she said, "I lived among the great apes for many years. I dwelt among the tree branches and hunted the lesser beasts. Korak brought me fruits and flesh. He fought for me and was kind to me." There was a wistful note in her voice. She had not thought of Korak a great deal of late.

For a time the two rode on through the deep night, both silently absorbed in their own reflections. The girl was thinking of a god-like figure in a leopard skin who came nimbly through the trees. Behind him, shaggy and powerful, swung a huge isthmapoid ape, while she, Meriem, laughing and shouting her welcome, swung from a swaying limb before her sylvan bower. Ah, the happiness of those sunny days! The freedom! And, best of all, Korak!

The man's thoughts were rather jumbled. He suddenly realized he had come mighty close to falling hopelessly in love with this girl who had voluntarily told him just now her weird story. And he had been about to offer her his honorable name! A girl who by her own admission had lived among the apes! The Hon. Morison Baynes trembled at the narrowness of his escape. Yes, he loved her. Perhaps, though, he would not have to propose.

Son-65

Several evenings before the house party disbanded, the young Englishman again referred to Meriem's story of her life in the jungle. There was one thing he wanted definitely answered before he committed himself to the plan he was considering. "Who was Korak?" he asked. Meriem laughed; "I used to think he was an ape—but now I know he is a MAN," she answered, with emphasis on the last word. "A white man!" persisted Baynes. "Was he your —er—?"

The girl's clear, beautiful eyes looked straight into his. She was far too unsophisticated to guess what he was driving at. She laughed merrily: "No, he was not my brother. Korak—was just Korak!" and again she broke into a gay laugh as she realized that never before had she attempted to analyze the relationship that existed between herself and Korak. The Hon. Morison said no more. But he thought of a certain luxurious apartment he owned in London.

The last evening they were to be together Meriem sat out a dance with Baynes under the tropical moon bathing the veranda. She had been listening entranced to his stories of London and Paris, all like fairy-tales to her fascinated ears. After a short silence he drew closer and bent his lips close to her face. He put his arm about her and she did not draw away. "I love you!" he whispered. She did not reply. "Tell me," he said, "that you return my love."

His lips had almost touched her when a vision of Korak sprang like a miracle before her eyes. She saw Korak's face, she felt his lips hot against hers and then for the first time she guessed what love meant. She drew gently away from Baynes. "Let us wait," she said. "I am too young to marry." The Hon. Morison was perfectly sure he had not mentioned marriage. "Good night," she said, and left him. Baynes lighted a cigarette, blew the smoke toward the moon, and smiled.

Son-66

The house party guests departed with Bwana to guide them on their week's trip to the nearest railway station. Morison Baynes stayed on, however, and with My Dear and Meriem waved farewell from the veranda. The young Englishman now lost no opportunity of pouring impassioned words of love into Meriem's ear. But always he urged her to go with him to London, saying they would be married when he reached home.

During Bwana's absence his ranch foreman had employed a new assistant who went by the name of Hanson. He was a tall, well-knit man of thirty; blond of hair and smooth shaven. On the few times that Meriem had encountered the newcomer there was a tantalizing familiarity about him that convinced her that she should be able to call the fellow by name, yet she was unable to do so. Tomorrow he was to conduct Baynes north to the caravan trails.

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At sun up Meriem, from her bedroom, watched the little party set forth. Meriem had avoided Morison Baynes the evening before, nor had she bid him farewell. She was uneasy at his attitude. Why had he not spoken to Bwana of his love for her? Why would he not permit her to tell My Dear? It was all very puzzling to the little jungle girl. But now that he had gone, Meriem missed his gay companionship. Did she love him?

Meriem could not answer her own question as she wandered that day in the garden. She was restless. For the first time since she had come to them, Meriem felt a prisoner in the home of Bwana and My Dear. It was evening when she heard a step beyond the rose-hedge, and saw a hand reach towards her. It held a message from Baynes. "I cannot go without seeing you again," she read. "Come alone to the clearing tomorrow and say goodby to me."

Son-67

More was in the letter—words that made Meriem's heart beat faster and a happy flush mount her cheeks. But when next evening she arrived at the trysting place she was astonished to find not Baynes but two other riders. She drew back startled as she saw one was Hanson. "Mr. Baynes had an accident. His horse fell on him, so he sent me to meet you and bring you to camp." In the darkness Meriem could not see the fellow's gloating triumphant expression.

Troubled by this unexpected turn of events, Meriem followed Hanson. All night they rode. The girl did not know where the camp lay. Hanson had brought well-filled saddle bags. They halted for breakfast and again rode on. Meriem finally became suspicious. Gradually the attitude of this fellow was changing. Often she surprised him devouring her with his eyes. Steadily an idea urged itself on her—somewhere, sometime before she had known this man.

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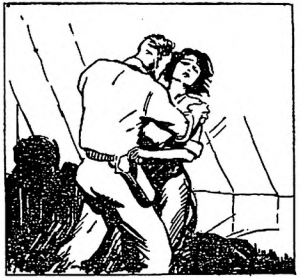
At last they broke out of the jungle and upon the opposite river bank Meriem saw a camp. "Here we are," said Hanson. He fired his revolver and native boys came to paddle them across. When she asked for Baynes, Hanson pointed toward the single tent standing in the center of the enclosure. "He's in there," he said and held back the flap for Meriem to enter. As she did so she saw the tent was empty.

"Where is Mr. Baynes?" she demanded. "He ain't here," replied Hanson, grinning. "But I'm here and I'm a better man that he is. You don't need him no more. You got me." He laughed as he reached for her. Meriem struggled to free herself. As she fought there came a sudden recollection of a similar scene and with it full recognition of her assailant. He was Malbihn the Swede! But today there would be no Bwana to rescue her.

Son-68

Many miles to the west, as Meriem struggled in the arms of the Swede, Morrison Baynes paced back and forth before his tent. He kept urging his boy to heap more brushwood upon the fire. It had suited his purpose to send Hanson instead of going himself to meet Meriem, but as the hours passed and they did not come, his conscience troubled him. After a sleepless night Baynes realized he had been tricked!

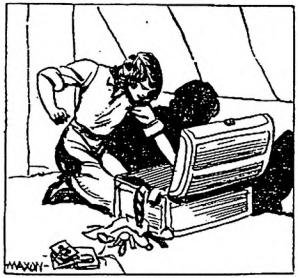
Moreover he knew that he was deserted; left purposely with little food and one black youth in the savage jungle. As he pictured the probable fate of Meriem at the hands of the Swede, his rage grew greater. Then as the thought sunk deeper that it was all his own fault he was filled with shame and loathing at himself. Could he still make amends? At least he could try. Several hours later he picked up the track of horses.



As Meriem fought with Malbihn, her hands pinioned to her sides by his brawny grip, hope died within her. She knew how useless it was to cry for help. As she was slowly being overcome, one hand came in contact with the butt of the Swede's revolver where it rested in the holster at his hip. Quickly she drew it forth. Instinctively Malbihn's hands flew out to stop her, but Meriem leveled it at his heart and pulled the trigger.

The hammer fell futilely upon an empty shell! Malbihn was again clutching her. For a moment she eluded him, but at the very entrance to the tent he caught her. Wheeling upon him with the fury of a wounded lioness, Meriem grasped the long revolver by the barrel, swung it high above her head and crashed it down full in Malbihn's face. With an oath of pain and rage the man staggered backward, released his hold and sank unconscious to the ground.

Son-69



Meriem knew she had a chance to escape, if only she had cartridges for this empty revolver. A swift survey of the tent revealed a hide-covered box in one corner. She rummaged hastily through it but at first found only odds and ends of the Swede's belongings. Then at the very bottom, wrapped in musty paper, she came upon a little carton containing ammunition belonging to the weapon she had taken from Malbihn.

Her search rewarded, Meriem turned to flee from the tent. Lying uppermost upon a little pile of newspaper clippings yellowed by age and handling, something arrested her attention as abruptly as though Fate itself had placed the thing before the girl's eyes. It was the photograph of a little girl. Meriem examined the string-tied packet curiously. Where had she seen that picture before? Suddenly it came to her.

This was a picture of herself as she had been years and years before. Where had it been taken? How came the Swede to have it? Why was it also reproduced in the old newspaper clipping attached to it? What was the story the faded type told? Absorbed in this puzzling reflection she was startled by a noise outside. Hastily slipping cartridges into the revolver and tucking the packet into her blouse, she crawled forth into the underbrush.

Staggering through the jungle, the once fastidious and handsome Morrison Baynes doggedly made his way, followed by his native attendant. Though he did not know it, he had about reached the Swede's camp. His face and hands were badly scratched, his clothes were tattered and he almost fell from exhaustion, yet remorse for his scurvy act and an honorable desire to right the wrong done the woman he now knew he really loved, urged him on.

Son-70

Cautiously Meriem crawled to a big tree and from its upper branches paused to plan her next move. She thought Malbihn dead, so terrific a blow had she dealt him, but scarcely had she hid herself than she saw the Swede emerge from his tent, wiping the blood from his face and hurling a volley of abuse and questions at his terrified followers. Shortly afterward, the whole camp set forth in search of her. Meriem waited until they were beyond hearing.

Stealthily she made her way to the river. She dared not swim its crocodile-infested waters. In an open space she saw the beached canoes that had brought the party across the night before. But the landing place was in full view of the guard left behind and the craft was an unwieldy thing for a long girl to handle. Yet there was no other means to safety and she must cross the river. Quickly she ran from her hiding place.

No sooner had she launched the canoe and shot out into the stream when a shout from behind the camp told her she was discovered. A moment later she saw Malbihn and his men rush to the landing and push a great canoe from shore. But Meriem's hopes ran high; they could not overtake her now—five minutes start of them was all she wanted. Malbihn urged his men on with curses and blows, realizing the girl was again slipping from his clutches.

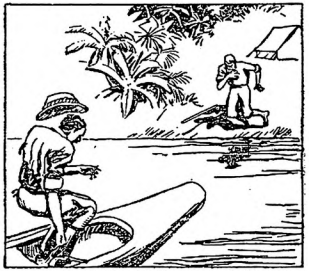
The canoe, in the bow of which he stood, was only a hundred yards behind the fleeing Meriem when she ran the point of her craft beneath the overhanging trees on the shore of safety. Malbihn screamed at her to halt. He seemed to have gone mad with rage at the realization he could not overtake her. Then he threw his rifle to his shoulder, aimed carefully at the slim figure scrambling into the trees—and fired! Malbihn was an excellent shot!

Son-71

Meriem owed her life to an accident. At the very instant Malbihn fired at her, his canoe ran upon a submerged tree trunk, giving the craft a slight jolt. But it was enough to throw his rifle out of aim. The bullet whizzed harmlessly by the girl's head as she disappeared into the foliage. Meriem threw back a mocking laugh at the baffled Swede. Soon she had swung far into the forest and Malbihn returned to his camp furious with defeat.

Fighting his way through the tangled jungle a mile to the east, a man in torn khaki—haggard and bruised—came to a sudden stop as the report of Malbihn's rifle resounded through the forest. A dozen times he tripped and fell as he forged ahead but at last he and his black companion came to the fringe of jungle upon the river's brim. Through the screening foliage Baynes saw Malbihn's canoe making rapidly for the opposite shore.

Morrison Baynes could scarcely repress a shout of exultation as he also beheld the canoe Meriem had abandoned. Quickly the two slid down the branches into the boat. As it shot out upon the bosom of the river, Malbihn spied it. He fingered his rifle and waited. Now the canoe was within hailing distance. Malbihn, on the shore, with a start of surprise, saw the white man was Baynes. He knew that Baynes had come for vengeance.



Malbihn shrugged his shoulders. Others had sought him for vengeance during his checkered career, yet he still lived. Aiming his rifle he yelled "What do you want?" Baynes leaped to his feet. "You!" he shouted, whipping out his revolver and firing almost simultaneously with the Swede. As the reports rang out Malbihn staggered, then fell, and Baynes crumpled backward into the canoe. The two white men, far from civilization, had shot each other.

Son-72

The black man at the paddle held the canoe in midstream. Dazed, he knew not what to do. Then he saw Baynes feebly attempt to move. The black crawled forward and lifted the white man to a sitting position. As he did so there was another shot from shore and the negro pitched backward overboard, the paddle still clutched in his dead fingers. Another bullet whizzed close to the Englishman's head before he could reach protection.

Lying down in the canoe, Baynes turned weakly to face the shore and there saw Malbihn resting on his elbows, again leveling his rifle. The Swede had been sore hit. His aim was not as sure now. With difficulty Baynes turned over and grasping his revolver drew himself up until he could aim over the edge of the canoe. With painstaking care he took aim. A flash, a report, and Malbihn's giant figure jerked to the impact of another bullet.

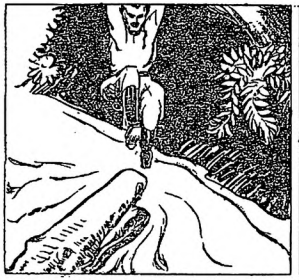
But he was not yet dead. Again the Swede fired, the shot splintering the canoe close to Baynes's face. Baynes replied and thus, doggedly, the two wounded men continued to carry on their weird duel until the winding river had carried the young Englishman around a wooded point beyond the range of Malbihn's bullets. Then the Hon. Morison Baynes slumped weakly into the bottom of the canoe and lay there for hours in a partial stupor.

The echoes of the shooting came faintly to the keen ears of another white man; a tall broad-shouldered giant in khaki riding at the head of a swarthy crew of sleek black natives. The man's face was set in hard, stern lines and the marks of sorrow were written deep about his mouth. It was the Big Bwana, Returning home he had found Meriem gone. Baffled by her disappearance, he was trailing an Arab band.

Son-73

Night came before Baynes regained consciousness and realized that he was floating down a great African river—alone, wounded and lost! By using his open palm as a paddle, he painfully managed to move the native canoe nearer to shore. Almost opposite him he could hear the roaring of a lion. An overhanging tree branch brushed his face. Eagerly he grasped it testing its strength. He would seek safety in the trees!

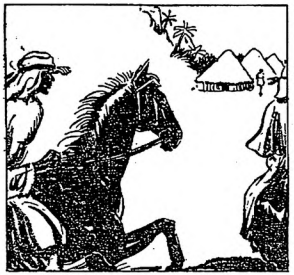
He drew himself slowly upward until his feet swung clear of the canoe, which, released, floated silently from beneath him and lost itself in the dark shadow downstream. He had burned his bridges behind him! Again the lion roared. Baynes wondered if it had been following him. He must climb or drop back into the river. He struggled to raise one leg over the limb, but, weak from bullet wounds, he found his strength ebbing.



He was ready to drop from exhaustion when a new fear tightened his muscles. He saw two spots of flame a short distance from and above him. The lion was standing on the river bank glaring at him—waiting! The young Englishman's feet hung almost to the water's surface. He heard a slight commotion in the river beneath him, followed by a sound that froze his blood. It was the click of a crocodile's great jaw snapping together.

He struggled futilely to safety. Even as he did so he felt himself slipping—into the river and those frightful jaws. Then he heard the leaves above him rustle to the movement of some creeping creature. The branch he hung upon bent from an added weight. Still Baynes clung desperately. He felt a soft warm pad upon the fingers of one hand and then a hand reached down and dragged him up among the branches of the tree.

Son-74



A full day's march ahead of the Big Bwana who trailed them hour by hour, five young Arabs were returning homeward to the tribe the Sheik ruled. They had been far inland on a successful ivory raid. A handsome, sinister youth rode at their head when they sighted some fleeing object in the distance. Perhaps it was a lost hunter! Thinking always of possible ransom money, Abdul Kamak put spurs to his horse and rode toward it.

Meriem, after eluding the Swede, roamed the forest several days before she was aware she was lost in its dense maze. Her ammunition was exhausted searching for food, when she came abruptly to a small clearing where once had stood a native village surrounded by its fields. All unconscious of impending danger, she was making her way down its deserted street to the jungle when she noticed a cloud of dust on the horizon.

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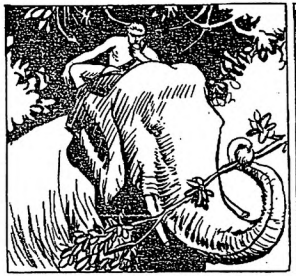
Rapidly it rolled toward her until she made out a horseman in flowing white coming straight across the plain. Like a startled doe Meriem sped for the jungle, but ere she could reach its safety Abdul Kamak had won the race and she was his prisoner. The young Arab saw that the figure clad in the riding boots and breeches was a woman —a young and lovely one, too. Here was a gift from Allah! Swiftly he swung her to his saddle.

75 MAXON

Two more days the men rode with their fair prize until the girl saw the Arab tents on the yellow desert sands. Vaguely it all seemed strangely familiar to her as with shouts of greeting the wild youths led Meriem directly into the presence of a tall grim old fellow who glared down upon her from the folds of his burnoose. All the fears and terrors of her childhood returned as Meriem stood before the Sheik and knew that he recognized her.

Son-75



Tantor, the elephant, flapped his big ears lazily as he slowly walked through the teeming midday jungle. Now and then he would reach for some juicy morsel with his trunk. On his broad back lolled Korak, the ape-man. They made but a few miles each day. What matter to Korak. He had no place in particular to go. Since the years before when he had lost Meriem, life was meaningless. He was content with food and sleep.

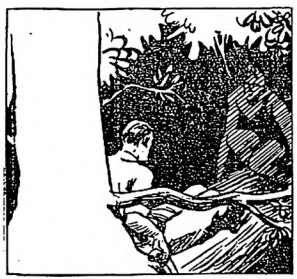
Today he had come upon the trail of the Sheik's band but it did not interest him. All he wanted was never to see a human face again. Men always brought him sorrow and misery. It had been years since he had come this far north and the sight of a river aroused him somewhat from his apathy. For a while he busied himself fishing, then curled himself in a tree to sleep. Numa, roaring beneath him, awoke him. He saw that night had fallen.

Presently something else caught his attention. He listened. Was there something in the tree beside himself? Yes, he heard the noise of something trying to clamber above. Then the click of a crocodile's jaws in the waters beneath! Korak gazed downward. Against the faint luminosity of the water he saw the figure of a man clinging to one of the lower branches. Silently the ape-man clambered toward him. He felt a hand beneath his foot.

MAXON 76

Korak reached down, clutched the figure beneath him and dragged it up among the branches. It struggled weakly and struck at him; but Korak paid no more attention than would Tantor to an ant. He lugged his burden to the higher safety and greater comfort of a broad crotch, and there propped it against the tree's trunk. Numa, below, roared in anger at being so robbed of his prey. Thus Korak, the ape-man, saved Morison Baynes.

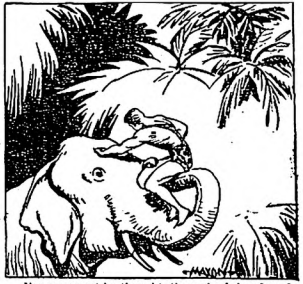
Son-76



The ape-man shouted down at the lion, unable to climb trees. He taunted him in the language of the great apes. Baynes, listening, felt assured a gorilla had captured him. He was stealthily reaching for his revolver when a voice asked in perfectly good English: "Who are you?" Baynes started so that he nearly fell from the branch. "Ye gods!" he exclaimed. "Are you a man?" He tried to see the features behind the voice.

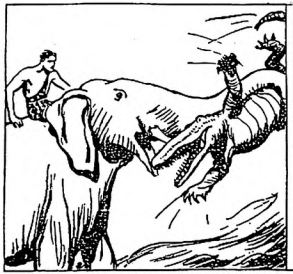
"Don't be afraid," laughed Korak, "I'm a man—a white man, like you. They call me the Killer," giving the English translation of the name the apes called him. Then, after a pause, he again questioned Baynes. Bit by bit, he learned the story up to the moment Baynes had fallen into the ape-man's hands. Before they had done, the first gray dawn relieved the darkness. Korak brought water from the river, and fruit to Baynes to eat.

"I am going to the Swede's camp," he announced, "and find this girl you speak of. I will come back with her." And so Korak set out rapidly toward the North, leaving behind the man too weary and wounded to accompany him. Some hours later Korak came out upon the river bank directly across from Malbihn's camp. He could see men moving about amid the huts. But how was he to cross? Not even he would dare.

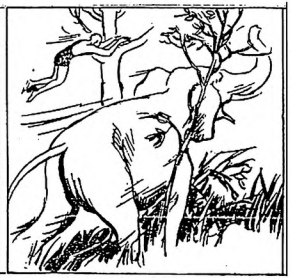


For a moment he thought, then wheeled and sped away into the jungle uttering a peculiar cry, shrill and piercing. Finally his ears were rewarded by the sound he craved—the trumpeting of a bull elephant. Tantor broke through the trees, standing with upraised trunk before his friend and master. A low-spoken command and the mighty pachyderm swung Korak to his head and lumbered off, guided by the ape-man's naked feet against his hide.

Son-77



A mile above the Swede's camp Korak knew there was an elephant ford and thither he urged Tantor. Straight into the flooded river the elephant forged. Toward midstream an unwary crocodile attacked him, but Tantor's sinuous trunk dove beneath the surface and grasping the amphibian about its middle dragged it to light and hurled it a hundred feet down stream. Perched high and dry Korak made the opposite shore and headed Tantor south.



No obstacles other than the larger trees withstood Tantor's swinging gait. At times Korak was forced to abandon the broad head and take to the trees above, so close did the branches sweep the elephant's back; but at length they came to the clearing where lay the Swede's camp. Nor even here did they hesitate or halt. At a word from Korak, and raising his tender trunk high above the thorn boma, Tantor broke through it.

A dozen blacks squatting before their huts leaped to their feet and fled for the gates. Tantor, hating man, would have given chase, but Korak guided him toward a canvas tent. "There," he thought, "should be the girl and her abductor." Malbihn lay in a hammock before that tent. He was still weak from his fight with Baynes. He heard the screams of his blacks. Then around the corner came the huge bulk of the great tusker.

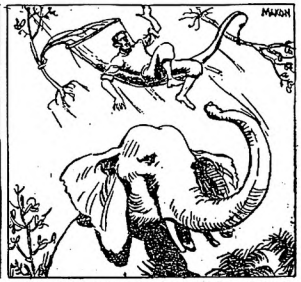
Tantor stopped short near the wounded man's hammock. Malbihn cowered, moaning, too frightened and weak to escape. Then to his astonishment a man slid to the ground from the elephant's back. Almost at once Malbihn recognized the strange figure as the white warrior of the jungle who had freed the king-baboon from the Swede's trap. "Where is the girl?" demanded Korak fiercely in English.

Son-78

"There ain't no white gal here," said Malbihn. Korak took a threatening step toward the Swede, who shrank from the anger in the ape-man's face. "Tell me the truth!" he demanded. "Spare me," whined Malbihn, "and I'll tell you all I know. She escaped from me—across the river. It was only the reward I wanted anyway. She has passed as the Sheik's daughter since childhood, but she ain't his no more than I am. Kill me and you will never know the secret."

Malbihn chuckled to himself as he saw Korak's surprise. "Only the old Sheik and me knows where she came from and he won't tell." Malbihn was uneasy; the ugly little eyes of the elephant watching him made him nervous. Korak went into the tent to assure himself that the girl was not there. As he disappeared, Tantor took a step nearer the Swede. He advanced his snake-like trunk toward the fellow, who shrank still deeper into the hammock.

Tantor uttered a low, rumbling sound as he felt and smelled back and forth. His little eyes blazed. At last he had found the creature who had killed his mate long years before! Tantor, the elephant, never forgets or forgives! Malbihn saw the towering rage above him and shrieked for help. Before Korak could stop the enraged elephant, its trunk encircled his victim and then hammock, canopy and man were swung high above Tantor's head.



Trumpeting and roaring, he hurled the entangled mass over the thorn wall, out into the jungle. Korak gazed sorrowfully at the tragedy. He had no love for the Swede, but he would have saved him because of the secret he possessed. Tantor, again docile as a kitten, at Korak's bidding hoisted the killer aloft. From their hiding places the Swede's men saw the strange white warrior mounted on the head of his charger disappear into the jungle.

Son-79

Meriem stood trembling before the Sheik. The years and her clothes had not altered her so much but that one who had known her features so well in childhood would know her now. To think that after all these happy years she should again be thrust into the hands of this villainous, cruel, old, desert chief! Stepping toward the shrinking girl, he grasped her fiercely by her arm. "So you have come back to your people at last," he snarled.

Meriem's silence seemed to fan the Sheik's wrath. He struck her a heavy blow upon the face. When, some hours later, she regained her numbed senses, she gave way to tears of despair. For she found herself within a filthy tent. Tattered garments, scarcely covering her, had taken the place of her riding outfit. The rifle and that precious packet with her baby photograph were also gone. Worst of all, hideous old Mabunu sat grinning in one corner.

Now the Sheik lost no time in re-establishing the old relations that had existed between them in the past. He seemed to revel in finding new methods of torturing or humiliating her and among all his followers none dare defend her. As of old, she was permitted the freedom of the village, but escape was impossible. So the wretched days passed for Meriem. But there was one in the Sheik's camp destined to aid her.

One afternoon as she sat before her tent thinking of how Korak had rescued her from this very place eight years before, she suddenly became aware she was not alone. Somebody stood close behind her who had approached noiselessly. A hand fell upon her shoulder and as she waited in dumb terror the blow she felt the Sheik was about to give her, she looked up instead into the dark eyes and handsome face of the young Arab, Abdul Kamak.

Son-80

Meriem listened to the fiery young Arab in bewilderment as he talked in low, persuasive tones. He it was who had stolen from her the little packet she had found in the Swede's camp. Abdul Kamak was no fool. At once he had noted the likeness of his captive that day, to the child in the faded photograph. But why was the Sheik's daughter clothed in the garments of the unbeliever? Then he had read the yellowed newspaper clippings.

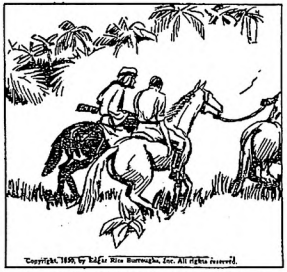
With some difficulty he translated the story printed in French. Azdul Kamak had been to Paris. With one of his desert fellows he had gone there and he had improved his time learning the customs and some of the language of his conquerors. As he came to understand the clipping's context his eyes went wide. Then in his mind, he formed a plan cunningly calculated to enrich himself. Now he was attempting to carry it out.

With fervent passion he poured forth in Arabic his torrent of words: "From the moment my eyes beheld you they told me my heart must ever be your servant. I ask that you trust me. Come with me and we will go where my father is a sheik mightier than yours. I love you—let me take you away from him. I will take you whether you will or no for I, too, hate the Sheik—" "You hate the Sheik?" came a grim voice from behind them.

Both turned to see the Sheik standing near. "Yes," shouted Abdul Kamak, "I hate you!" As he spoke he sprang forward, felled the chief with a blow and dashed across the village where his horse stood saddled. Leaping to it, he made for the gates. The Sheik, merely stunned, staggered up, shouting to his followers to stop the escaping Arab. But with a wild whoop and with reins flying loose, the son of the desert spurred on past the gates.

Son-81

Abdul Kamak rode straight for the caravan trail which headed northward to the nearest French garrison. Behind him, the Sheik's followers, soon forced to give up the pursuit, were returning home. The sound of their galloping horses came to the ears of a lone white man making his unsteady way across a clearing. Weary of the long hours in the tree, Morison Baynes had wandered far from the place Korak had left him, trying in vain to find the ape-man.



Too late for concealment, Baynes saw he was discovered. The Arabs closed in on him, questioning him in their language which he did not understand. They disarmed him, their leader swung him to a horse and away they galloped again toward the Sheik's village. Having sent the party after Abdul Kamak, the old Sheik was wroth that instead they had returned with a wounded and useless Englishman. Still he might not be entirely worthless.

The Sheik scowled terribly upon Baynes. "Who are you?" he asked in French. "I am the Hon. Morison Baynes of London," replied the prisoner. The title sounded promising, and at once the wily old robber had visions of ransom. His attitude changed. He would investigate further. "Why are you in my country?" he questioned. Baynes decided to tell very little. "I was searching for a young woman, stolen from her people," he replied.

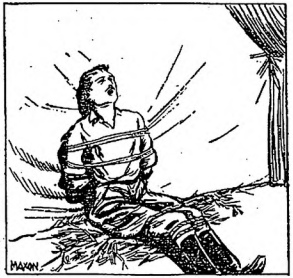
The Sheik looked at him craftily and led him toward a tent. "Is that the girl?" he asked. Baynes looked in the direction indicated and was astounded. "Meriem!" he cried, starting toward her. Roughly he was jerked back. Meriem leaped to her feet startled as she heard her name. "So you are the Christian dog who stole my daughter!" shrieked the Sheik. "You have earned death, Englishman, but if you can pay for your life I will give it to you."

Son-82

When speed was required of him Korak depended on no other muscles than his own. So after Tantor had again landed him across the river, the ape-man deserted his bulky companion and took to the trees in a rapid race toward the place where, from the Swede's hint, he believed the white girl might be. Dusk was falling when he came to the old familiar palisade. Loosening the rope at his waist he tossed the noose over one of the sharpened posts.

A moment later his eyes were above the level of the obstacle taking in all within their range beyond. Close by there was no one in sight and Korak dropped lightly to the ground within the enclosure. Then he commenced his stealthy search of the village. Not even the wild Arab curs heard his passage, so silently he went. Suddenly he stopped short—scarcely believing his ears, as clear on the evening air came the strains of an old English song.

Before Morison Baynes was bound and flung into a stifling hut, the wary Sheik made him write a letter to the English consul at Algiers wherein was demanded a large sum for his release. And then for a while he was left alone, a prey to his thoughts, and the miseries of his situation, the least of which was the loathsome squealing rats. One day he heard voices raised excitedly in the tent next to him. One was a woman's. He listened, convinced it belonged to Meriem.



He tried to think of some way of attracting her attention to his near presence. An idea came to him. In his rich tenor he sang a phrase from a melody he had often heard her sing during the happy days of Kwana's house party. For a moment he paused and then came her answering voice. She had recognized his. She spoke rapidly. "Goodbye, Morison," she called. "It is I, Meriem. Tomorrow if I still live I shall be worse than dead, for—" A terrible silence followed.

Son-83

On the evening that Korak entered the Arabs' village Meriem had gone to her rude bed in the women's quarters. It was in a corner of the Sheik's tent, screened by two priceless Persian rugs forming a partition. Presently the old chief parted the rugs and beckoned to her. "Meriem," he called, "come here." Listlessly the girl obeyed. By the flickering firelight she saw his half-brother, old and hideous, who gave her a toothless grin as she entered.

"You will be married," the Sheik said, "to Ali ben Kadin, my brother." That was all. He left the tent and the old Arab came toward her. Meriem shrank back, horrified. Ali ben Kadin clapped his hands. At once two slaves came in and at his bidding, seized her and dragged her off to the old fellow's tent. Here Meriem pleaded and threatened but all to no avail. Twice she tore herself away from him. Then it was she heard Baynes singing the tune he meant for her ears.

As the sound of the scuffle ceased, Morison Baynes went white with horror. He struggled frantically with his bonds. Freeing one hand he was able to cut the rope from his ankles and made for the tent's opening. As he stepped out a huge black barred his progress. Rage and a sudden bestial fury transformed the slight young Englishman into a savage beast and gave him strength. He leaped upon the giant black with a force that sent the slave to the ground.

Here they fought, the black to draw his knife, the white to choke the other's cry for help. The negro succeeded in drawing his knife and Baynes felt the sharp steel pierce his shoulder. Feeling with one hand over the ground, searching for some missile, his fingers touched a stone and closed over it. With a terrific blow he stunned the black and ran for Meriem's tent. But another reached it before him. It was Korak, the Killer!

Son-84

The old half-caste had just dragged Meriem into the rear chamber as Korak's knife slit a six-foot opening in the tent wall. The lithe figure of a jungle Adonis sprang through upon the astonished visions of the inmates. Meriem saw and knew him the instant he appeared and her heart sang with pride and joy. "Korak!" she cried. "Save me!" "Meriem!" Korak fairly shouted the word in his amazement at finding she was the captive.

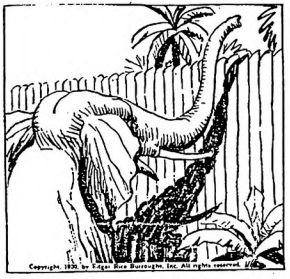
The Killer's fingers closed upon the throat of the hideous Ali. His knife plunged deep and an Arab was put out of harm's way. Korak turned toward Meriem and at the same instant a blood-stained, dishevelled apparition leaped into the tent. "Morison!" cried the girl. Korak turned, to see the man he had left in the tree-shelter. About to take Meriem in his arms, Korak hesitated. What was this fellow to her, and she to him?

A wave of misery swept over the ape-man. Already from without came alarming sounds. Men were running toward the tent. There was no time to be lost. "Quick!" cried Korak to Baynes, who scarce yet realized whether he was facing a friend or foe. "Take her to the palisades. Here is my rope; with it you can scale the wall and make your escape." "But you, Korak?" cried Meriem. "I will remain," replied the ape-man, grimly, "I have business with the Sheik!"

Meriem would have demurred, but the Killer, seizing them both, hustled them through the slit wall and out into the shadows beyond. "Now run for it!" he commanded, and turned to meet his foes. The ape-man fought well—fought as he never had before; but the odds were too great for victory, though he won what he most desired—time for the Englishman to escape with Meriem. Then he was overwhelmed by numbers, bound, and carried to the Sheik's tent.

Son-85

The Sheik eyed Korak for a long while without speaking. He was trying to think of some form of torture that would gratify his rage and hatred toward this creature who twice had been the means of his losing possession of Meriem. Beyond the palisade came the trumpeting of an elephant. A half smile touched Korak's lips and he gave a low, weird call before one of the blacks guarding him struck him savagely across the mouth.



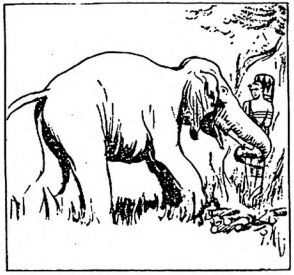
None knew the significance of that call, save Tantor in the jungle, who cocked his ears as the sound of Korak's voice fell upon them. He approached the palisade and lifting his trunk above it, sniffed. In his tent the Sheik rose at last, and, pointing toward the bound captive called two of his biggest slaves. "Burn him," he commanded. "At once." To a stake in the open space of the village center they dragged Korak and bound him tightly.

Bringing brushwood they piled it high about him, and the Sheik came that he might enjoy the agonies of his victim. But Korak did not wince even after the flames shot up. Again he raised his voice in the same low call and this time came the answering trumpeting of an elephant. Outside the palisade, Tantor had placed his head against the wooden logs and pushed; but the palisade was strong and only gave a little to the pressure.

The sound of Korak's voice calling him, and the scent of man, his enemy, filled the great beast with rage and resentment against the dumb barrier that held him back. He wheeled and shuffled back a dozen paces. Then he turned, lifted his trunk and giving voice to a mighty, trumpet-call of anger, lowered his head and charged like a huge battering ram of flesh and bone and muscle straight at the mighty barrier which sagged and splintered to the impact.

Son-86

Through the breach rushed the infuriated bull. Korak heard him come crashing and urged him to speed. The flames were creeping closer around the ape-man when the blacks, hearing the noise behind, turned to see the enormous bulk of Tantor lumbering toward them. Screaming, they fled and then the elephant was among them tossing the Sheik's men to right and left as he tore through the flames he feared to the comrade he loved.



The Sheik ran to his tent for his rifle. Tantor wrapped his trunk about the body of Korak and the stake to which it was bound, and tore it from the ground. The flames were searing his sensitive hide—sensitive for all its thickness—so that in his frenzy to rescue his friend and escape the hated fire, he all but crushed the life from the ape-man. Lifting his burden high above his head, Tantor raced for the breach in the palisade.

Rifle in hand, the Sheik rushed forth directly into the path of the maddened brute. He raised his weapon and fired once, the bullet missed its mark, and Tantor was upon him crushing him beneath gigantic feet as he raced over the Sheik's body as though it were but an ant in his pathway. Then, bearing his burden carefully, Tantor the elephant came to the opening he had just made in the palisade and entered the blackness of the jungle.

Meriem and Baynes, undiscovered, were about to scale the palisade by means of the ape-man's rope when the sounds of the tumult reached them. The girl, dazed from the unexpected sight of Korak whom she had long given up as dead, started as from a dream. "They are killing him!" she whispered, "We must go back." Cautiously the two retraced their perilous path, every step a danger, for now the whole village was aroused and moving about.

Son-87

From the shadows of a tent Meriem and Baynes each gave a gasp of horror. They had come at the very moment the elephant rescued Korak. Quickly it had all happened and now bedlam reigned throughout the village. Men, women and children ran helter skelter for safety. Curs fled, yelping. The horses, camels and donkeys, terrorized at the trumpeting of the pachyderm, kicked and pulled at their tethers. A dozen or more broke loose.

The galloping horses gave Meriem an idea. Motioning Baynes to follow she led him to the far end of the village. Here she knew were kept always ready for use a few of the camp's fleetest steeds. Luck was with them, for they flung themselves into the saddles without hindrance. The shortest path to freedom led straight through the center of the village and this Meriem took, Baynes close behind her, their horses running at full speed.

So sudden and impetuous was their dash for escape that it carried them half-way across the village before the surprised inhabitants were aware of what was happening. Then an Arab recognized them and with a cry of alarm, fired his rifle. The shot was a signal for a volley. Amid the rattle of musketry Meriem and Baynes leaped their flying mounts through the breach in the palisade and were gone up the well-worn trail toward the north.

And Korak? Tantor carried him deep into the jungle. When no sound came from the distant village the elephant laid his burden gently down. Korak struggled to free himself from his bonds, but even his giant strength was unable to move the strands of hard-knotted cord. While he lay there, working and resting by turns, the elephant stood guard above him. Dawn came and still Korak was no nearer freedom than before. Was he to die of thirst and hunger?

Son-88

All that night, as Korak lay despairing because he knew the elephant could not unloose the knots that bound him, Meriem and Baynes rode north along the river. The young Englishman had been sorely wounded by one of the Arabs' shots and the two were therefore doubly anxious now to reach Bwana's home. The day was still young when they came suddenly upon a party hurrying southward. It was Bwana himself and his sleek black warriors, searching for Meriem.

At sight of Baynes the big man's brows contracted in a scowl; but he waited to hear the girl's story before giving vent to the anger long pent in his breast. But when she had finished he seemed to have forgotten Baynes. His thoughts were on another subject. "You say that you saw Korak?" he asked. "Yes," replied Meriem, "as plainly as I see you!" Still doubting, Bwana repeated his question to Baynes, asking him to describe the ape-man.

"He is about my age," said Baynes, "remarkably muscled and exceedingly tanned." "His hair and eyes, what color were they?" It was Meriem who answered him. "Korak's hair is black and his eyes are grey—like yours," she said. Bwana turned to his head man. "Take Miss Meriem and Mr. Baynes home," he said. "I am going into the jungle." "Let me go with you, Bwana," pleaded Meriem. "You are going to search for Korak—I know it." Bwana turned sadly but firmly to her.

"Your place," he said, "is beside the man you love." A litter was rigged for the now feverish Baynes and the little cavalcade was soon winding slowly back along the river trail. Bwana stood watching them until they were out of sight. Not once had Meriem turned to wave farewell. With bowed head and drooping shoulders she rode. Bwana sighed. He loved the little Arab girl as he might have loved a daughter. Slowly he turned toward a nearby tree.

Son-89

As the last horseman disappeared, a swift change came over "Big Bwana." Leaping upward, he caught a lower branch and drew himself into the tree. His movements were cat-like and agile. High into the upper branches he made his way and there commenced to divest himself of his clothing. From the game bag slung across one shoulder he drew a strip of doe-skin, a neatly coiled rope, and a wicked looking knife. When he stood erect a grim smile touched his lips.

He threw back his head, his great chest expanded and his nostrils dilated as he sniffed the jungle air. His grey eyes narrowed. Crouching, he leaped to a lower limb and swung rapidly away into the jungle. Moving swiftly, he stopped only occasionally to raise his voice in a weird and piercing scream—and to listen for a reply. Several hours later, he heard, far off, a faint response. His nerves tingled. It was a bull-ape answering his cry.

Korak, finally becoming convinced that he must die if he remained where he was, spoke to Tantor in the strange tongue the elephant understood. He commanded the great beast to lift him and carry him toward the northeast. As Tantor bore him along Korak called aloud now and then in the hope of attracting Akut's band of apes, whose wanderings often brought them into this neighborhood. "Akut," he thought, "may possibly be able to unloose the knots."

It was worth trying at least—better than lying there in the jungle until he perished. The great ape had freed him from similar bonds upon that other occasion when the Russian had imprisoned Korak, years before in far off London. Traveling thus, alternately listening and calling, his heart beat faster as, far off in the jungle, he heard a welcome, hideous cry. Akut to the south of him had heard and was coming! There was another who heard them, too.

Son-90

Meriem rode with Bwana's party only a short distance before she came to a decision. Calling the head-man to her side she announced, "I am going back with Bwana." The black shook his head. "Bwana says I take you home," he said firmly. He fell to the rear where he might better watch her. Meriem half smiled. Presently her horse passed beneath a low-hanging branch, and the black headman found himself gazing at the girl's empty saddle.

A search for her proved useless and they were forced to resume their march without her, for by this time Bwana was delirious with fever. Through the trees Meriem raced straight back toward the point she believed Tantor would make for—a spot where the elephants often gathered, due east of the Sheik's village. Moving silently and swiftly she traveled several hours without rest. Nor did her instinct fail her, for presently she caught the scent of Tantor.

Twice she heard the familiar cry of a great ape calling to his kind. Meriem increased her speed until she almost flew. Soon there broke into sight ahead of her the great elephant, shuffling along with the man and the stake balanced in his upcurled trunk. "Korak!" cried Meriem from the foliage above him. Instantly the bull lowered his burden to the ground, and, trumpeting savagely, prepared to defend his comrade from this enemy.

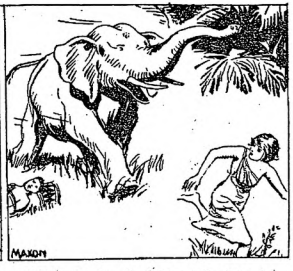
The ape-man, recognizing her voice felt a sudden jump in his throat. "Meriem!" he called back to her. Happily the girl clambered to the ground and ran forward to release Korak, but Tantor lowered his head and trumpeted a warning. "Go back! Go back, Meriem! He will kill you!" cried Korak. Then he tried to placate the beast; tried to order him away that the girl might approach and free him. But it was of no use. Tantor was determined no one should touch Korak. (CONTINUED SUNDAY).

Son-91

Korak hit upon a scheme. They must fool Tantor. "Pretend to go away," he called to Meriem. "Keep down wind and follow us." When she had disappeared he commanded the elephant to carry him again. Off through the jungle they went, coming presently to a clearing. Here Korak ordered Tantor to lay him down and fetch him water in his trunk. A moment the beast hesitated with cocked ears and attentive trunk. Tantor by nature is suspicious.

Then he moved away in the direction of the little brook. But scarce had his great bulk been screened by the dense foliage than he wheeled about and came cautiously back to the edge of the clearing where he could see without being seen. He would just wait and assure himself that all was well. Ah! It was well that he did! There she was now dropping from the trees, running swiftly toward his Korak. And she had a long knife in her hand!

Tantor's little eyes blazed savagely. His tail was elevated stiffly. He would let her reach Korak before he charged—then this strange white monkey would have no chance to escape! Meriem was almost at Korak's side when the elephant broke from the jungle, bellowing horribly, and charged straight down upon the frail girl. Korak screamed commands to his huge protector in an effort to halt him; but all to no avail. Meriem raced back for the trees.



But Tantor, for all his huge bulk, drove down upon her with the rapidity of an express train. Korak lay where he could see the impending tragedy. The cold sweat broke out upon his body and his heart seemed to have stopped its beating, for well he knew how the frightful scene must end. He wanted to close his eyes, but could not. His throat was dry and parched. Tantor was almost upon Meriem now. A dozen more strides and he would seize her.

Son-92

Never in all his savage existence had Korak suffered such blighting terror—never before had he known what terror meant! Meriem might reach the trees before Tantor overtook her, but even her agility would not carry her beyond the reach of that relentless trunk—she would be dragged down and tossed . . . What was that? . . . Korak's eyes started from their sockets! A strange figure had leaped from the tree which Meriem had almost reached.

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It was a white man, a giant in build, leaping beyond the girl straight into the path of the charging elephant! He was unarmed, recklessly facing what seemed to be certain death. With one hand raised, he faced the maddened Tantor. A sharp command broke from the stranger's lips. The great beast halted in his tracks. Meriem meanwhile had swung herself upward into the tree to safety. Korak breathed a sigh of relief not unmixed with wonder.

Then as he looked at Meriem's deliverer and recognition slowly dawned upon him, Korak's eyes went wide with incredulity and surprise. Tantor, rumbling angrily, swayed to and fro before the giant white man, who now stepped straight beneath the upraised trunk and spoke a low word of command. The savage look died from the elephant's eyes, and, as the man went toward Korak, Tantor trailed docilely at his heels. Meriem was watching too, and wondering.

Suddenly the man turned and she saw his face! With a startled cry, "Bwana!" the girl dropped and ran to his side nor did the elephant attempt to molest her. Together the three went to the helpless Korak. He lay there with a pathetic appeal for forgiveness in his eyes. "Jack my son!" cried the white giant kneeling at the ape-man's side. "Father!" came chokingly from the Killer's lips. "Thank heaven it was you. No one else could have stopped Tantor."

Son-93

Quickly the man cut the bonds that held Korak and as the youth leaped to his feet and threw his arms about his father, the older man turned to Meriem. "I thought," he said, sternly, "that I told you to return to the farm." Korak looked at them wonderingly. "You told me," replied Meriem, half-pleadingly, "that my place was beside the man I loved." And as she looked at Korak, her eyes filled with the wonderful light no other man had yet seen in them.

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The Killer started toward her with outstretched arms; but suddenly he fell upon one knee before her and kissed her hand reverently. A rumble from Tantor brought the three, all jungle-bred, to instant alertness. As their eyes followed the elephant's gaze, they saw the head and shoulders of a great ape appear amid the foliage. For a moment the creature eyed them, and then from its throat came a loud scream of recognition and savage joy.

Followed by a score of bulls like himself the great ape waddled toward them, shouting in the primordial tongue of the anthropoid: "Tarzan has returned! Tarzan, Lord of the Jungle!" It was Akut, and instantly he commenced leaping and bounding about the trio, uttering shrieks of delight, thus doing honor to a king greater than himself. Korak laid his hand affectionately on his father's shoulder. "Akut is right," he said, "there is but one Tarzan."

Two days later the three dropped from the trees at the plain's edge across which they could see the smoke rising from the farm chimneys. Tarzan of the Apes had regained his civilized clothes from the tree where he had hidden them, and, leaving the two lovers, he went ahead to get them clothes and horses. My Dear met him at the gate, her eyes filled with questioning sorrow mixed with joy at his return, for she saw he was alone.

Son-94

Lord Greystoke raised his wife's head and looked down into her eyes; his own eyes filled with the light of happiness. His voice was husky with emotion. "My dear," he said, "I have found her, and —him!" So great was Lady Greystoke's joy that she forgot the sad messages that awaited Meriem. And so, an hour later, Korak, the Killer, rode home to his mother and found in her arms and her eyes the love and forgiveness that he longed for.

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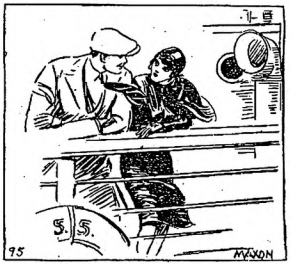
And then the mother told Meriem that Morison Baynes had not survived his wound. The expression in Meriem's eyes was only the sorrow she genuinely felt, but it was not the pain of a woman bereft of her best beloved. "I am so sorry," she said softly. "He loved me—but I did not know what love was until I knew that Korak lived." Lady Greystoke looked quickly at her son, the son who one day would be Lord Greystoke, and gave a little cry of joy.

The love she saw there answered the question in her heart. No thought of the difference in the stations of the girl and her boy entered her mind. To her, Meriem was fit for a king. She only wanted to know that her son loved the little Arab waif. Throwing her arms about them both she kissed them repeatedly, exclaiming: "Now I shall really have a daughter. A few days after the marriage ceremony, they all started for the coast to take passage for England.



Those days that followed were the most wonderful of Meriem's life. She had not dreamed, even vaguely, of the marvels that civilization held in store for her. The great ocean steamship filled her with awe. And then came London where the luxuries of the Greystoke town house quite took her breath away. Only one secret trouble tore at Meriem's heart. If only she knew that by birth she was worthy of her husband! Who and where were her own father and mother?

Son-95

A week later came one General Jacot bearing a letter of introduction from their mutual friend, D'Arnot. Tarzan knew the famous soldier by reputation; knew that his family was a famous one, for Jacot was in reality the Prince de Cadrenet, though too ardent a republican to use the title. After a dozen words both men formed a mutual esteem that was to endure through life. "Admiral D'Arnot believes you can aid me," began the distinguished visitor.

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"He tells me no one is better acquainted with Africa. Let me give you my story from the beginning. Many years ago my little daughter was stolen while I was serving with the Foreign Legion." Then briefly he related his long search, the huge rewards offered; the printed publicity and how they had been at last forced to give up in despair. But recently a young Arab, one Abdul Kamah, had come to him in Paris saying he knew where the girl was held captive.

It was supposedly near Tarzan's African estates. With growing tenseness Lord Greystoke listened; eagerly he scanned the faded clippings. Ringing a bell he said to the footman, "Ask my son's wife to please come here." A moment later Meriem entered. Jacot arose, startled and shaking with suppressed emotion exclaimed: "IT IS SHE!" Meriem rushed toward him—"I know you—I know you! Oh, now I remember," she cried as the old warrior folded her in his arms.

Lady Greystoke and Jack were summoned to learn the glad tidings. "You did not marry an Arab waif after all." Meriem laughed through joyous tears. "Aren't you glad?" "Meriem, my dear," said the son of Tarzan quietly, "I married YOU. For my part, I wouldn't have cared if you were an Arab—or a little white lady monkey," he added teasingly. "She is neither, my son," said General Armand Jacot, coming proudly to them. "Meriem, my daughter, is a princess in her own right."

Son-96